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DISESTABLISHMENT



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DISESTABLISHMENT

*The Charge delivered at the Second
Quadrennial Visitation of his
Diocese, together with an
Introduction*

BY

HERBERT HENSLEY HENSON, D.D.

LORD BISHOP OF DURHAM

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INTRODUCTION

I.

CONSISTENCY is a difficult achievement in changing times. From the young, indeed, equity suggests that it can hardly be expected. The words which Newman places in the mouth of Carlton in his tendentious novel *Loss and Gain* will command general assent :

“ Who does not change his opinions between twenty and thirty? A young man enters life with his father’s or tutor’s views ; he changes them for his own. The more modest and diffident he is, the more faith he has, so much the longer does he speak the words of others ; but the force of circumstances, or the vigour of his mind, infallibly obliges him at last to have a mind of his own ; that is, if he is good for anything.” *

This equitable plea fails when the old change their opinions. In their case inconsistency is rightly resented unless it can be justified by reasons which are not only adequate in themselves, but are also morally respectable, that is, which cannot

* Vide p. 190, Ninth Edition.

be thought to be connected with considerations of personal advantage.

It is, indeed, a grave matter for an old man to change his mind on a subject which has long engaged his thought, and with respect to which he has taken a prominent public course; and, if to his age he must add the authority which comes of high office and a large measure of public trust, an accusation of inconsistency must needs carry for him a special gravity. Nor may he fairly resent the suspicion and unpopularity in which his change of opinion will surely immerse him, nor yet refuse, as unreasonable and unfair, the demand for an explanation which may be pressed on him by his friends.

I had, indeed, allowed myself to imagine that my abstention throughout my life from partisan connexions might have exempted me from the requirement to explain or justify my course of action to anybody. As I have belonged to no party, and have accepted the comfortless isolation and practical impotence of the fact, no party had any right to count on me for any given course. "With a great sum obtained I this freedom," and I thought my franchise went far enough to release me from any obligation to defend myself. It was, however, represented to me that no man who had expressed himself so freely on ecclesiastical questions, and commanded so considerable

a measure of public attention, could fairly assume that his change of attitude on an issue of such importance as Disestablishment was a merely personal matter. In fact it was pressed on me by some, whose judgment on such a point I could not but respect, that I owed it to my friends and to the Church to set forth the process by which I had been led to my present conclusion. What has compelled me at the end of my career to abandon that earnest championship of the Establishment of the Church of England which I have maintained throughout a ministry of more than forty years?

Very reluctantly, therefore, I have undertaken to preface the published version of my Second Quadrennial Charge with some account of the considerations which have led me to the conclusion which therein I publicly announced.

My championship of the Establishment, though enthusiastic, persistent, and sincere, has never been unconditioned. I have never concealed from myself the anomalous character which the relations of Church and State had come to possess, nor failed to perceive the likelihood of that character becoming so exaggerated as to render Disestablishment morally indispensable. In 1900 I edited the volume entitled *Church Problems, A View of Modern Anglicanism*, and wrote in it the Essay dealing with 'Establish-

ment.' There I pointed out the tendency of the course of politics throughout the nineteenth century 'to destroy the recognized incidents and symbols of Establishment,' and declared that 'the broad result has been the evident disqualification of the State for the exercise of ecclesiastical functions.' I argued that, on the balance, the good predominated over the evil, but I indicated quite clearly that I did not feel very confident that this predominance would continue :

"It is no mean defence of the Establishment that its worst defects are theoretical, and its best excellences practical. When historic anomalies are found to work well, the prudent citizen will be slow to disturb them. Christendom itself, as we know it, is anomalous, and there is nothing to show that the anomalies of the English Establishment are in any special degree offensive. It is true, as we have shown, that the course of recent politics has tended to render the State incompetent for the exercise of those ecclesiastical functions which it has exercised in the past, and can legally exercise still. It must, however, be added that the modern State has largely lost its ecclesiastical interests, and has little desire to resume those ecclesiastical activities which once almost absorbed its attention. Parliamentary incompetence is thus mitigated by Parliamentary apathy, and, so long as this is the case, no intolerable results are likely to arise from the excessive powers which the State legally, if not constitutionally, possesses over the Church. *It is not, however, hard to see*

that if this salutary indifference were to yield to any outburst of popular feeling, and a reversion to an active ecclesiastical policy should be induced, the time-worn connexion between Church and State would quickly come to an end."

This contingency is what has actually happened, and I think to-day as I thought thirty years ago, that it is properly fatal to the Establishment.

The last years of the nineteenth century and the opening years of the twentieth were filled with vehement controversy. A brisk "No Popery" agitation was in full course, and the 'Ritualists' were in an exasperated and exasperating temper. The intervention of Sir William Harcourt gave political importance to the ecclesiastical crisis. I was deeply concerned for the peril of the Establishment, and gave expression to my feelings in a substantial pamphlet—*Cui bono? an Open Letter to Lord Halifax*—which had a considerable circulation. One passage may be quoted :

"My Lord, you will not do me the injustice of supposing that I am unconscious that *a point may be reached in the State's demand upon the Church, at which a higher interest than that of her immediate work would demand an assertion of her latent denominational rights* ; nor am I so arrogant as to assume that my own judgment ought to be accepted by any one else as determining when that point is reached. Yet, with all deference, I would submit to your Lordship that, as things now stand in England, no

one can maintain without extravagance that the State so limits the spiritual liberty of the Church as to make it the duty of Churchmen to seek release from the Establishment."

I could so write in 1899: I cannot repeat the words in 1929. For in the interval great changes have taken place, and the claim of the State as indicated by the rejection of the Prayer Book Measure does now in my judgment so "limit the spiritual liberty of the Church as to make it the duty of Churchmen to seek release from the Establishment."

The changes have taken place both in the Church and in the State. In the one, the Enabling Act has organized it on a denominational basis: in the other, democracy in the modern sense has finally prevailed. It will be worth while to review these. And first of the Church.

THE ENABLING ACT.

The agitation in favour of self-government for the Church is almost coeval with the Oxford Movement, but the Movement itself was too academic in temper, and too medievalist in ideal, to be reconciled easily with modern democracy as it disclosed itself on every plane of the national life during the period which followed the first Reform Act. The Oxford Movement, after the

crushing disaster of Newman's secession, ceased to be dominant within the University, and began to develop in the parishes, where it soon acquired a popular character. It shared the democratic dislike of the Establishment for reasons of its own. The final triumph of the agitation for self-government was effected by an alliance between two normally discordant tendencies—the Tractarian which aimed at restoring the medieval dualism between Spirituality and Temporality, and the popular which aspired to secularize the State. The point of agreement was an intense dislike of the existing Establishment. In the "Life and Liberty" movement a working harmony was effected between Tractarianism and Democracy.

I was opposed to the projected self-government both as a triumph of medieval dualism, and as a step towards the secularization of the State. I fought it hard. When at length the Enabling Bill was carried, the Archbishop of Canterbury had some justification for describing me in the House of Lords, with characteristic courtesy, as 'the most vigorous, persistent and eloquent of the critics.' What I felt may be inferred from the following extract from my private Journal written on December 6th, 1919 :

"The Enabling Bill passed its 3rd Reading in the House of Commons 'amid cheers.' Nothing could have been

more futile and helpless than the brief debate which preceded its passage. Beyond a few Dissenters who were handicapped by their sectarian principles, there were none who indicated any dislike of the Bill. The Establishment has fallen like an overripe fruit. How soon the endowments will follow remains to be seen. No longer can any man claim the Englishman as such for the Church of England. Baptism could have been assumed, and as it sufficed to create membership in the Church of Christ, so it has hitherto been held sufficient to create membership in the Church of England. Now Baptism must go along with a sectarian claim which deliberately excludes from the Church of England a large part of the Church of Christ in England! And they brazenly assert that they have changed nothing."

It had throughout been apparent to me that, if the Establishment was to be maintained, extensive reforms of the ecclesiastical system were indispensable; but I had urged that these ought to be effected by the normal constitutional procedure in which the first step was the appointment of a Royal Commission. Preaching in the Temple in February, 1919, I had insisted on this method. I stated the argument thus :

"Why should not a Royal Commission do for the Church in 1919 the same service as that which a Royal Commission did in 1835—examine thoroughly the distribution of the ecclesiastical endowments and the conditions of their tenure, and make proposals for reform? Why should not Parliament include in its schemes of reconstruction a

measure of thorough and comprehensive reform of that great and ancient institution, on whose efficiency, far more than is commonly realized, the social health of the community depends? If, indeed, the nation no longer cares to concern itself with the National Church—if Parliament cannot, or will not, spare the time for ecclesiastical reform, or if Churchmanship has become in English minds so sharply severed from citizenship as to make the very notion of Parliamentary action in ecclesiastical affairs appear incongruous and even intolerable, then there can be no valid reason for prolonging the existence of a confessed and mischievous anomaly. The hour will have struck for Disestablishment and Disendowment. The only *rôle* left to the most famous of National Churches will be that of one more autonomous sect within a nakedly secularist State. Either Disestablishment or a thorough reform of the Established system appears to be the alternative with which the nation is faced. Denominational autonomy and national establishment are mutually exclusive.”

A little later I followed up the sermon in the Temple with two signed articles in the *Times* (February 20th and 21st, 1919), in which I developed my argument at greater length: and when, at last, the Enabling Bill had passed the House of Commons I wrote to the same journal a letter which I headed significantly, “The Passing of a Bill and the Passing away of an Ideal” (December 15th, 1919). In spite of my efforts, the agitation organized by the ‘Life and Liberty League’ had been crowned with success. The

Enabling Act received the Royal Assent before the end of the year. My Journal runs as follows :

“The year 1919 will be notable in the annals of the Church of England as the year in which denominationalism finally vanquished the National Ideal. The Enabling Act gives the *coup de grâce* to the Establishment, though the fact will be obscured for some time to come by the retention of the legal position and ancient endowments. I have fought the denominational spirit hard, but it has been too strong. ‘The stars in their courses’ have fought against the National Idea. It is the first time that the method of political agitation has been frankly adopted in the ecclesiastical sphere. Even so, I do not believe that the Enabling Bill could have been carried, if the public mind had not been obsessed by other and extremely urgent matters.”

Canon Temple, now the Archbishop of York, who had been the protagonist of the Life and Liberty crusade, invited me to preach in Westminster Abbey, but I could not bring myself to do so. I appreciated the generosity of his action, but my feelings of regret and resentment were still too strong.

The Enabling Act, however much I might regret it, was now part of the law which I had, as a Bishop, to administer : and I exerted myself, both in Hereford and in Durham, whereto I had been translated in the summer of 1920, to get the parishes to frame their rolls of parochial church

electors. In my Primary Charge delivered in November, 1924, and published under the title *Quo tendimus?* by Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton, I reviewed the circumstances in which the Enabling Bill had been passed, pointed out the defects which its working had disclosed, and made some suggestions for its amendment. The problem of maintaining as an Established National Church a denomination which could claim no more than 3,500,000 parochial church electors in a population ten times as numerous plainly required solution. The territorial basis on which the Church of England had been organized from time immemorial, and which was the assumption of the Establishment, having been abandoned, the Church of England had acquired (to employ an expression current in the seventeenth century) the character of "a gathered church," of which the constituting unit was the congregation. Accordingly its numerical strength became of crucial importance. "If the Church of England had no greater hold on the nation than the statistics which I have quoted appear to show, it would be difficult to maintain its right to the name and claim of a National Church."

At that time I was thinking most of the risks to which the legitimate interest of the Nation as such might be exposed from the self-regarding action of the Church. "The present system,"

I said, "needs to be supplemented by some form of Referendum which should be applicable to all legislation affecting the general population. Thus, for instance, the subdivision of an ancient diocese, involving the severance of the people from any normal connexion with a great Cathedral, and inflicting considerable violence on local and historical sentiment, ought not to be carried through against the clearly-indicated wishes of the population."

The veto of Parliament saved the Bishoprick of Hereford from dismemberment, but a referendum to the populations concerned would have saved Winchester also, and at the same time would have avoided a conflict between Parliament and the National Assembly which was equally unfortunate and superfluous. No referendum, however, could properly apply to those deeper issues which are commonly described as spiritual. In their case the application of the Veto of Parliament would be equivalent to such a direct collision between Church and State as could not but be fatal to the Establishment.

RESTORATION OF DISCIPLINE.

The Enabling Act expressed, and by expression strengthened, the spirit in the Church which, for lack of a better term, I will call denominational self-assertion. It was not only in the sphere of

legislation that the Church of England aspired to independence. The explicit admission by Parliament itself, that Parliament could no longer fulfil its ancient function as the House of Laity in a National Church, strengthened the tendency, which had already become powerful among the clergy, to repudiate the authority of the ecclesiastical courts on the ground that they were destitute of adequate spiritual authority. There were audible mutterings of an extension of the revolt to the case of "State-appointed" bishops. The restoration of discipline in the Church of England acquired a more hopeless character precisely at the moment when the disorders which had provoked so much scandal became multiplied and in a sense organized. The question began to take shape in serious minds, whether the maintenance of the Establishment and the restoration of Discipline were not mutually contradictory. Might the Church not be driven to a choice between the two—either Establishment and anarchy or Disestablishment and discipline?

I am not writing a chapter of our recent ecclesiastical history, but seeking to explain how I have come to find myself unable any longer to defend the Establishment. All through my life I have felt strongly the moral disadvantage which clerical undiscipline inflicts on the English clergy.

Very early in my career as a clergyman the connexion between moral influence and clerical disobedience was brought home to me by an incident in Barking, where I was Vicar from 1888 to 1895. Then, as so often since, the newspapers were full of reports of "Ritualistic" extravagances, and a considerable labour conflict was in progress. On a Sunday morning a "mass meeting" was held in the Broadway of my parish, and much wild talk was indulged in by the orators. As soon as the service in the parish church was ended, I went to the meeting, and listened to the speeches. My presence was soon observed, and I was loudly called upon to speak. So I mounted the chair, and did my best. I spoke of Law as the shield of the Poor, dwelt on the folly of lawlessness by men who claimed to have justice on their side, and entreated the strikers not to alienate the goodwill of the public by essays in violence. I was listened to with attention, and seemed to be making an impression, when a man in the crowd, brandishing a newspaper, which contained some amazing description of "Ritualistic" lawlessness, shouted out—"It's all very fine for the Vicar to tell us to keep the law; but the Parsons break it soon enough when it suits them." Against that *argumentum ad clerum* there was really nothing effective to be said. I left the meeting with a vivid realization of the morally incapacitating

effect which disorders in the Church have on the influence of the clergy.

The Report of the Royal Commission on Ecclesiastical Discipline was issued in 1906, and at once became the magnet of much comment and criticism. I myself examined it with some care and little sympathy in articles in the *Contemporary Review* and the *Edinburgh Review*, which were included in the volume entitled *The National Church*, published by Messrs. Macmillan and Co. in 1908. As I read my words after an interval of twenty years, I find myself astounded, not by any essential change in my own convictions, for, indeed, though I should express myself now with more caution and less asperity, I do not find that there is any essential change, but by the amazing revolution which has taken place in the circumstances of our national and ecclesiastical life. "The recommendations of the Commissioners," I wrote at the time, "would not secure immediate relief from ecclesiastical disorder, and they would fatally compromise the character of the National Church." I think that opinion was well founded, and that it has received confirmation from our recent experiences. I argued strongly that Convocation, a purely clerical assembly, was ill-suited for the task of Prayer Book Revision, and I urged that "our strength as a Church is to sit still" :

“There are forces at work, which if but they be given time enough, will silently but surely correct the obscurantist tendencies which at the moment are dominant in the hierarchy. At Oxford and Cambridge notably the theological teaching is passing steadily into the hands of men who are scholars of the modern type, and their disciples are teaching the candidates for Holy Orders in London, Durham, Lampeter, and even in the seminaries. It cannot but be that the effect of such teaching should make itself apparent in the pulpits and in the parishes. I believe the Tractarian Movement is a spent force, and that every year as it passes weakens the dominance of sacerdotalist views among the clergy. If only the nation would be patient, the National Church will right itself. Moreover, I cannot believe that the Low Church Party is going to perish ignobly from sheer poverty of intellect and lack of energy. At present, indeed, that once great party is in a moribund condition, which, if the consequences to the Church and Nation were not so serious, might well move to scorn. It is prostrate in the universities, almost non-existent in the world of thought and literature, scarcely apparent in the councils of the Church. Its sole claim to consideration lies in its missionary activities, and in this respect it presents a curious parallel to the Roman Church. The intellectual penury of Evangelicalism is as deplorable as it is notorious. . . .

“Yet, in spite of its present degradation, there is in Evangelicalism a power which, if but its leaders could make a holocaust of their paralysing prejudices, might save the National Church. Let the Low Church Party find in the Reformation, not a series of petrifying traditions and rigid precedents, but the principle of intellectual progress and ecclesiastical adaptation. Let Evangelical-

ism do sincerely, what Sacerdotalists can only do with risk and embarrassment, receive with a willing mind the new learning of the modern epoch, and reconcile a Protestant nation to a reformed and ever reforming Church.

“But for the resurrection of the Low Church Party, as for the decay of sacerdotalism, we want time, not ‘Letters of Business.’” *

Thus I expressed myself in 1907: and as I read the words now in the light of the commentary which the intervening years have provided, I can find nothing in them which conflicts with my present position. Those years transformed the entire framework of circumstance in which ecclesiastical questions had to be answered. Neither the Church nor the Nation emerged from them without profound and far-extending changes. The course of national politics became so filled with absorbing anxieties that the exciting controversies, in which Mr. John Kensit had jumped into prominence, ceased to retain a place in the public mind. With dramatic completeness the Unionist Government had been overthrown, and the Liberal Party established in power with a parliamentary majority of unprecedented magnitude. The first stages of Prayer Book Revision were traversed in the tranquillity of general indifference. Economic strife in England, the menace of civil war in Ireland, a constitutional

* Vide *The National Church*, p. 408 f.

crisis which all but took on a revolutionary character, the darkening outlook in foreign affairs filled the public mind, until, in the late summer of 1914, the supreme disaster of the Great War fell like an avalanche on the world. Just before the outbreak of War the Church in Wales had been disestablished and partially disendowed. I had taken an active part in opposition. As Dean of Durham I addressed public meetings organized in the interest of 'Church Defence' in Sunderland, South Shields, Hartlepool, and Bishop Auckland, so that I became widely known in the diocese as an opponent of disestablishment. The proposal to disestablish the Church in Wales was repugnant to me, not merely on general grounds, but for the particular reason that it dealt with an important issue of national policy on sectional lines. Historically the four dioceses in Wales were an integral part of the Church of England, and I resented the implicit assumption that they constituted a separate unit. Welsh disestablishment was really, in my opinion, a partial disestablishment of the Church of England, and as such open to objections of a special and formidable character.

It is difficult to exaggerate the influence of the Great War on the life of the English people. As time passes, and we look back on those terrible years over a lengthening interval, we are able to

see events in a juster perspective. Always we discern more clearly the disintegrating effect which the monstrous aberration of War has had on the character, beliefs, habits, and ideals of the nation. Here I am but concerned with the effect on the Church, and only with that so far as it assists me to interpret to others the development of my own mind with respect to the question of disestablishment.

How, then, did the Great War affect the Church of England? In the first place, it broke the tradition of uniformity, which the lawless individualism of the 'Ritualists' had done so much to weaken and discredit. The rubrics were now everywhere treated with contempt. There were many extenuating circumstances. So many of the more active clergy had been withdrawn for service as military chaplains, that the organization of parochial work was widely dislocated. The familiar procedure of the Established system seemed almost ludicrously inapplicable to the novel conditions with which the parish clergy were suddenly confronted. A "National Mission," inaugurated with much enthusiasm, and conducted with much energy, tended to discredit the normal methods of the Church. 'Uniformity' became a 'bad word' in ecclesiastical circles, and Establishment (of which it was regarded as the expression) became widely dis-

credited. Clergymen of every description cast aside the trammels of the law, and the Prayer Book became in many parishes (like the ' Bidding Prayer ' in the 55th Canon), rather a suggestion for the conduct of public worship than a law regulating it.

In the next place, it created a vast discontent in the minds of the chaplains, whose influence on public opinion, based on the credit of their military service, was out of all proportion to their pastoral experience, learning, or wisdom. The new lawlessness in the parishes connected itself easily enough with the quickened sense of ecclesiastical failure, which their experiences during the War had created in many religious minds, and especially in their own.

The War had indeed emphasized two features of the Church of England, which were very offensive to the conscience and reason of devout Christians brought suddenly into the novel situations and tragical experiences of War—its exclusiveness and its insularity. At the Front the familiar attitude towards non-Anglicans was inconvenient, and even absurd. It was difficult to maintain the traditional relation of the Incumbent to the Dissenting Minister, which had seemed natural enough at home. The khaki uniform obscured denominational distinctions : and the comradeship of the trench and the

hospital disallowed the isolating habit of the parish. Reunion came to be almost a passion with the chaplains. Ever since I preached the course of sermons in Westminster Abbey which was published in the volume, *Godly Union and Concord* (John Murray, 1902), I had been known to advocate closer relations with Non-episcopalians, and when, in 1909, I had disregarded an episcopal inhibition by preaching in the Digbeth Institute in Birmingham,* I became generally identified with the cause of Reunion. This circumstance explains the fact that, in the course of the War, I used to receive from time to time letters from chaplains, unknown to me, who assured me of their sympathy and support. The practice of accepting invitations to preach in Nonconformist Chapels, which is now fairly common, was then sufficiently unusual to provoke angry protests from some Anglicans. My correspondents emphasized the disgust with denominational distinctions which their experiences at the Front had bred in their minds. When the Lambeth Conference met in the late summer of 1920, the subject

* I had no intention of breaking the law, which I thought (and think) allowed my action, nor had I any reason to suppose that my action would be resented by anyone. I was but doing what (as Dr. Jowett assured me) the Rector of Birmingham had done in the preceding year. The legal issue, so unexpectedly raised, seemed to me so important that I disregarded the inhibition deliberately in order to get it legally determined.

which more than any other was pressed on it by public opinion was that of Reunion.

The national character of the Church of England has ever been proudly emphasized by its advocates. It has been held to secure English Christianity in the *via media* of a sane religion, equally removed from the baleful fervours of fanaticism and the servile legalism of superstition. "Our Church," wrote Lord Halifax, in the greatest of all political pamphlets, "is a Trimmer between the frenzy of fanatic visions and the lethargic ignorance of Popish dreams." *

The English character, for which Englishmen have an unbounded admiration, has been thought to express the admirable moderation of the national religion. English patriotism has united the Church of England and the Monarchy in a single homage. "Church and King" has been a popular toast. In fact, no part of the Englishman's national inheritance has been the subject of more unqualified eulogy than our admirable Establishment and our incomparable liturgy. Now, seen against the black and blood-stained background of the War, itself the fell fruit of exorbitant nationalism, this much-emphasized character of the Church of England as a national church had a less attractive appearance. Many

* Vide Foxcroft's *Life and Letters of Sir George Saville, first Marquis of Halifax*, vol. ii., p. 342.

questions began to stir in English minds. Was Christianity rightly thought of as an idealized version of national character? Were Englishmen, indeed, as Milton thought, really entitled to describe themselves as in a special sense 'God's Englishmen'? Ought not the Religion of Fraternity to have restrained rather than hallowed the bellicose ardours of its professors? The New Testament, when read without prejudice, seemed ill-adapted for use as a manual of militant nationalism. There was a widely-distributed disposition to insist on the Catholic, super-national aspects of Christ's religion, and a waxing tendency to value and emphasize whatever in the Established System witnesses to another than a national origin.

It is, then, easy to see that the effect of the War would not tend to make the working of the established system easier. Indeed, a Church of England, which should be purged from exclusiveness and insularity, could not but be restive under the rules and regulations which it had received from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The general discontent found expression in two movements, that of the Anglo-Catholics and that of the "Life and Liberty League."

THE ANGLO-CATHOLIC MOVEMENT.

Of the Anglo-Catholic Movement it is not necessary to write at length, since my mind was frankly expressed at the time, and nothing has occurred to lead me to regret my refusal to give it any kind of formal recognition. Various circumstances compelled me to devote much attention to the Movement. I had promised some years before to deliver a course of lectures on 'Anglicanism' in Upsala, and this promise was carried out during September, 1920. My visit to Sweden, immediately after the Lambeth Conference had ended its memorable sessions, was marked by an incident of more than personal interest. Together with the Bishop of Peterborough (Dr. Woods) I had the privilege of representing the Anglican Communion at the consecration of two Swedish Bishops in Upsala Cathedral, and publicly receiving the Holy Communion according to the Swedish rite. This action of two English Bishops was widely, and, I think, rightly, interpreted to imply a solemn affirmation of the historical character of the Church of England as a Reformed Church. When later I published my Swedish lectures in the volume entitled *Anglicanism* (Macmillan and Co., 1921), I took occasion to write a Preface,

in which I examined the Anglo-Catholic position as disclosed in its official pronouncements, and disallowed it as essentially inconsistent with Anglican principles, traditions, and ideals. Perhaps I may fitly quote my conclusion.

“I must needs think, therefore, that the Anglo-Catholic Movement cannot possibly provide a satisfactory alternative to the Anglicanism which it is so busily engaged in destroying. Moreover, while its success in this work of destruction may not improbably be considerable, I do not believe it can replace Anglicanism in the acceptance of English laymen. So long, indeed, as the Church of England continues to be in name and legal status the National Church, there will be little disposition to enquire too closely into the policies and procedures of its members, for the generous assumption that a National Church ought to include many types of Christianity is firmly rooted in English minds. With the severance of the historic link between Church and State—a contingency which no considering Anglican can now regard as improbable or remote—this tolerant theory will be subjected to a strain which it will hardly survive.” *

Two years later I published a small volume entitled *In Defence of the English Church* (Hodder and Stoughton, 1923), in the preface of which I set forth at length the reasons which led me to the conclusion that, if the Anglo-Catholic Movement succeeded in its openly-avowed objects,

* Vide Preface, p. xxxviii.

“English Religion, where it actually touches human life, and shapes human character, would be cast in the Roman mould.” *

If, like S. Augustine, I were to publish a series of “Retractationes,” it would not be these pronouncements on the Anglo-Catholic Movement which would most require my attention. But, while I can find little or nothing of substance to retract, I should like to add much by way of supplementing comment. I can see now, what was not apparent to me then, that the Anglo-Catholic Movement owed its astonishing success, less to the specific contentions of its principal exponents, than to the great volume of discontent with the arrogant insularity of Anglicanism which it so vehemently expressed. At least it proclaimed a version of Christ’s religion which was historic and catholic, which refused to see in the Reformation of the sixteenth century a final version of truth, and which disallowed decisively the Reformers’ attitude of scornful hostility towards medieval Christianity. So far it appealed to that great multitude of considering Christians, by no means limited to the membership of the Church of England, who were groaning under the yoke of a narrow and unimaginative Protestantism, and crying out for a larger and more satisfying presentation of the Gospel than a National

* Vide *l.c.*, p. 25.

Church as such could offer. An Anglo-Roman minority was exploiting for its own purposes (which, to do it justice, were not concealed) the legitimate, and indeed inevitable, discontent of devout and educated Anglicans, who themselves had no liking for Rome, and, indeed, in most cases regarded the distinctive Roman doctrine and discipline with profound dislike.

I can see now, what I did not then suspect, that the Anglo-Catholic Movement owed much to a cause which is operating silently but with ever-growing effect in the religious life of England. "The real strength of the Catholic Movement," it has been said, "is that the pressure comes from below." * The rise of the working classes and the decline of the older Protestantism are coincident and connected. Perhaps the explanation is provided in the forecast of the late Professor Brewer. His learned work on *The Reign of Henry VIII* (John Murray, 1884) ends with a luminous chapter in which he examines both the origin of the English Reformation and the character of the Reformed Church of England. "Deference to the wishes of the great middle classes has, at all times, been the ruling influence," he maintains, but what if 'the great middle classes' should cease to play a ruling part in the national life?

* Vide *Church Times*, January 1, 1926.

“So long, then, as the middle classes remain the governing body and main power in the nation, so long will the Church of England remain as the representative of their religious peculiarities and convictions, their plain good sense of duty, their love of order, their intense loyalty, their indifference to ideal excellence, their dislike of novelty, their suspicion of all departures from the common and familiar types of human honesty and goodness. So long also will they interpret and justify the prayers and creeds of the Church of England, not by some standard of the Catholic Church in this or that century, but by the same feelings which demanded and modified the Reformation at its origin. It is only when political power shall have been transferred to new hands, and new classes shall have supplanted the old, that the Church of England will cease to be their exclusive representative, or the rigid exponent of the Reformation. Only then will it be called upon to modify its teaching and enlarge its sympathies.”

Forty-five years have passed since these words were written, and many new factors have entered into the course of our religious development, yet they have not wholly lost relevance to our present situation. It would carry me too far from my present purpose to pursue the line of fascinating but rather disconcerting reflection which Professor Brewer suggests. Here I must content myself with adopting his suggestion as a partial explanation of the ease with which the Anglo-Catholic propaganda has been carried on. There is a difficult but salutary exercise, which the

student of Religion must accept if he would not be led far wide of the truth, namely, the discounting of his own opinions and judgments by the prejudices of his class and social habit.

If, then, with my present knowledge, I should now write a detailed criticism of the Anglo-Catholic Movement, I should still condemn its formulated objects, but I should make allowances which would in some degree mitigate the too indiscriminating severity of my former judgment. What I said was, in my belief, just and merited, but there were other considerations which could not be excluded from a genuinely equitable verdict on the movement. It too was a post-war phenomenon, and it could claim the sympathy which that character ensures.

Opinions may vary as to the merits of the Movement itself, or as to the circumstances which facilitated its advance, but there will be only one opinion as to its immediate effect. There was a rapid and extensive increase in the lawlessness by which the Bishops were encountered in their dioceses. Enforcement of the law, difficult before the War, now became apparently hopeless.

Of the Life and Liberty Movement I need add nothing to what has been already said, except to observe that the Enabling Act, which was its supreme achievement, had been preceded by a brisk agitation throughout the country in favour

of a far ampler self-government than the Act secured, and thus created the conditions of a severe disappointment in the future. Expectations were created in many minds which could never be satisfied within an Established Church, and a temper diffused among churchmen which was frankly contemptuous of whatever in the Church's history and habit could be described as disclosing its 'national' character.

PRAYER BOOK REVISION.

When, therefore, after the long interruption caused by the War, public attention was again turned towards domestic reforms, the task of Prayer Book Revision was resumed in a changed atmosphere, and with a changed intention. The suppression of specific illegalities had given place to a larger and more intelligent understanding of the problem which those illegalities really presented to the citizen and to the churchman. Not any longer was primary importance attached to the little exasperating details of the prevailing disobedience, but men asked themselves the graver 'previous question,' Why is it that reasonable and religious men (for such obviously most of the lawless clergy are) have come to feel themselves free thus consciously and habitually to disobey the law? Revision was no more designed to

secure the triumph of a persecuting faction, but to remove the roots of disorder by making law intelligent and equitable. The spirit in which that process ought to be entered upon was clearly indicated by the Report :

“ Our consideration of the evidence laid before us has led us to two main conclusions. First, the law of public worship in the Church of England is too narrow for the religious life of the present generation. It needlessly condemns much which a great section of Church people, including many of her most devoted members, value : and modern thought and feeling are characterized by a care for ceremonial, a sense of dignity in worship, and an appreciation of the continuity of the Church, which were not similarly felt when the law took its present shape. In an age which has witnessed an extraordinary revival of spiritual life and activity, the Church has had to work under regulations fitted for a different condition of things, without that power of self-adjustment which is inherent in the conception of a living Church, and is, as a matter of fact, possessed by the Established Church of Scotland. The result has inevitably been that ancient rubrics have been strained in the desire to find in them meanings which it has been judicially held they cannot bear ; while, on the other hand, the construction placed on them in accordance with legal rules has sometimes appeared forced and unnatural. With an adequate power of self-adjustment, we might reasonably expect that revision of the strict letter of the law would be undertaken with such due regard for the living mind of the Church as would secure the obedience of many, now

dissatisfied, who desire to be loyal, and would justify the Church as a whole in insisting on the obedience of all.

“Secondly, the machinery for discipline has broken down. The means of enforcing the law in the Ecclesiastical Courts, even in matters which touch the Church’s faith and teaching, are defective and in some respects unsuitable. They have been tried and have often failed; and probably on that account they have been too much neglected. Although attempts to deal administratively with ritual irregularity have been made, they have been unsuccessful, in some cases on account of the lack of firmness of those who made them, but also largely because, in regard to the rites and ceremonies of public worship, the law gives no right or power to discriminate between small and great matters.

“It is important that the law should be reformed, that it should admit of reasonable elasticity, and that the means of enforcing it should be improved; but, above all, it is necessary that it should be obeyed. That a section of clergymen should, with however good intentions, conspicuously disobey the law, and continue to do so with impunity, is not only an offence against public order, but also a scandal to religion and a cause of weakness to the Church of England. It is not our duty to assign responsibility for the past; we have indicated our opinion that it lies in large measure with the law itself. But with regard to the future we desire to state with distinctness our conviction that, if it should be thought well to adopt the recommendations we make in this report, one essential condition of their successful operation will be, that obedience to the law so altered shall be required and, if necessary, enforced, by those who bear rule in the Church of England.”

I accepted *ex animo* the conclusion to which the Royal Commission had been led, but I suspect that it was not so accepted by many who shared my devotion to the Establishment and my dislike of lawlessness. The action of many Bishops, not themselves Anglo-Catholics, in associating freely with the activities of the Anglo-Catholic Movement, alarmed and distressed me, both because it tended to 'spoil the pitch' of Revision by exaggerating certain features in it, and because it obscured in the public mind the painful and perplexing breach between the deliberate professions and the actual practice of English clergymen which was to my thinking the gravest feature of the prevailing lawlessness.

The Anglo-Catholic crusade, carried on with little regard to the traditional prejudices of English people, did much to inflame public feeling, and thus tended to counteract the salutary change of attitude towards the problem of ecclesiastical disorder which we have described. When, in October, 1923, Dr. Frere, the Superior of the Community of the Resurrection, Mirfield, was appointed to the Bishoprick of Truro, Protestant indignation found public expression. The new Bishop was known to be a man of unusual distinction and great personal charm, but his close connexion with the more 'advanced' section of the 'Anglo-Catholic' party suggested

that the enforcement of the law had been frankly abandoned even by the State. My Journal records that at this time "Sir W. Joynson-Hicks wrote rather urgently asking me to be one of the speakers at a public demonstration in the Queen's Hall early next year 'in defence of Reformation Principles.'" The letter in which I declined this invitation may be quoted as stating the position which at that time I held and defended :

"October 5th, 1923.

"MY DEAR SIR W. JOYNSON-HICKS,

"I have always thought that it is undesirable for the Bishop of a diocese to take part in public meetings of the kind described in your letter; and that general objection is on this occasion somewhat strengthened by the apparent connexion of the projected demonstration with Dr. Frere's nomination to Truro. It would be indecent for a bishop to *seem* to criticize the ecclesiastical policy of the Crown.

"Again, while I believe myself to be loyal to 'Reformation Principles,' I am not very sure that I should accept the description of them which would pass in some quarters. It does not appear altogether improbable that I might be too much out of touch with the audience, and, perhaps, too much out of sympathy with the platform, to be really a suitable speaker at the meeting in Queen's Hall.

"But while I must decline your very kind invitation, *I share the anxiety which you feel*. Dr. Frere's elevation to the Bench is a very significant event. That a clergyman, however personally distinguished—and Dr. Frere's

distinction is marked and universally admitted—should publicly associate himself with an organized movement for destroying the ecclesiastical settlement to which every Bishop is pledged, and, on the very morrow of his action, should be himself made a Bishop, can only mean that, *in the eyes of the Prime Minister, that settlement is dead*, and ‘the game of law and order is up’ in the Church of England. But then, *Quo tendimus?* I am publishing the articles which I wrote to the *Morning Post* in July with an Introduction and some additions,

“HERBERT DUNELM.”

Writing, on December 6th, 1923, to the Bishop of Norwich in answer to a letter in which he had suggested excluding the Communion Office from the process of revision, I said :

“I think the policy of ‘Hands off’ the Communion Office is really a counsel of despair.

“My own view is that we should frankly re-examine the whole system doctrinal and liturgical, and having brought it into accord with the deliberate mind of the Church, expressed constitutionally, should enforce it at all costs. This means, no doubt, a secession, but unless we are prepared to face the possibility of a secession, we had better not put hand to the task of revision at all. In view of the Anglo-Catholic aggression, it has seemed to me essential to make reform of the Law Courts advance *pari passu* with the revision of the formularies.

“But I am not hopeful of success: only there is nothing else to be done unless we are to give up the conflict, and let the rebels have their way.”

It would be easy to multiply such statements from my letter-book, but to do so would be both tiresome and superfluous. I have quoted enough to make my position clear. It was precisely that of the Royal Commission's Report, save that I desired to combine in a parallel effort the Reform of the Ecclesiastical Courts and the Revision of the Book of Common Prayer.

As the work of Revision approached its conclusion, and the Bishops assembled to consider the suggestions agreed upon by the ecclesiastical assemblies, and to give them their final shape, it became apparent that the combination which I desired was not really possible. The two undertakings were, indeed, as I steadily insisted, united inextricably, so that the one apart from the other was stripped of much of its practical value, but they were too considerable to be carried through synchronously. We must first revise the Prayer Book, and then reform the Ecclesiastical Courts.

THE MEETINGS AT LAMBETH.

In the development of my mind on the subject of Disestablishment, which I am here endeavouring to trace, an important place must be assigned to this final phase of Prayer Book Revision. For the first time I found myself drawn into close and continuing relations with the Episcopate as a

whole. Hitherto I had held a detached position. It will be easily understood that the extraordinary circumstances in which my consecration to the Bishoprick of Hereford (February 2nd, 1918) had taken place did not make it easy for me to associate freely with my brethren. I resented deeply the public agitation organized by the English Church Union, and particularly the part played in it by some of the Bishops. But Time, the great healer, had mitigated my sense of injury, and enabled me to see the whole episode in a larger perspective. Experience had speedily demonstrated the artificial character of the outcry against my consecration, and my life in Hereford had altogether falsified the ill omens with which it was introduced. I was keenly interested in the Revision, and realized intensely that the Church of England had arrived at a critical point in its relation to the State and in its own spiritual development. As we sat round the table in the drawing-room at Lambeth, reviewing with meticulous care the whole mass of suggested changes, and considering the familiar Prayer Book line by line and almost word by word, disclosing frankly our personal judgments, and contributing freely our unique knowledge of the actual life of the Church as it proceeded under our eyes in our dioceses, some definite conclusions began to take shape in my mind. I learned much that I had

not known : I realized much that I had known but had not realized. I began to see where the limits of practicable change must be drawn, and I perceived more clearly than ever before what consequences would follow our success and our failure.

We were an assembly of Bishops, and that circumstance alone sufficed to immerse us in much popular suspicion. I have often reflected on the unpopularity of the Bishops as a class, and wondered what its true explanation might be. Of course, if we hold with J. A. Froude that "bishops have produced more mischief in the world than any class of officials that has ever been invented," we shall be in little doubt, but comparatively few educated and equitable people would put the case against the episcopate quite so strongly as that. Perhaps the explanation lies in the fact that bishops, probably more than any other officials, are the slaves of the system which they administer, and since this system claims to be religious, and by that title to push itself into the holy places of personal conviction and the intimate relations of life, the *dehumanizing* of its officials is particularly offensive and calamitous. Nothing is now more common than the denunciation of bishops for their absorption in the trivialities of ceremonial because they have to insist, as officials responsible for enforcing the

rubrics, on the rubrics being obeyed. Explain it how we will, the fact appears incontestable, viz. that the public impression of the Bishops is that of persons at once pretentious and petty, who can command neither the obedience of the clergy nor the respect of the laity, and at the same time present a sinister blend of limitless authority, administrative helplessness, and impenetrable craft ! This normal unpopularity of the episcopate was now exploited to the utmost in an organized agitation, which set itself with considerable success to prepare in advance a bad reception for the Revised Book, when at last it should emerge from the conclave at Lambeth. One qualification the Bishops possessed which their critics conspicuously lacked. They did know what was actually going on in the parishes. Most of them had spent much of their lives as incumbents, and knew at first hand where 'the shoe pinched' in the existing system. All of them were in close touch with the working clergy : many of them were men of recognized distinction, and some of them were eminent in those studies which were most requisite for the work of Prayer Book Revision. Apart altogether, therefore, from their official character, the Bishops could advance no slight claims to the respectful attention of serious Churchmen.

As soon as we began our work, we were inun-

dated with suggestions from various quarters. There was a 'Green Book' from the Anglo-Catholics, a 'Grey Book' from the "Life and Liberty" group, an 'Orange Book' from the Alcuin Club, but from the Protestants came nothing but denunciations of opponents, and proposals for a 'short and easy' way for 'putting down Ritualism.' The strength and the weakness of our Protestant critics lay in their total abstinence from constructive effort. Revision was not popular at any stage, and it could easily be made highly offensive to the large lethargic mass which suspects and resents alteration in the use and wont of its life. Change was only demanded by discontented minorities of conscientious and considering people, who chafed against divers features of the Established System, which either hurt their consciences, or offended their reason, or restrained their enthusiasm, or hampered their efforts. The Bishops sought to disentangle what was legitimate in this multifarious demand for revision from what was properly destructive of the system itself. They did not simplify their duty into the single business of crushing or evicting all the dissident factors within the Church.

IMPRESSIONS.

The impressions made on my mind by the discussions at Lambeth may be summed up in three propositions.

(1) *I realized that the Church of England was no longer sufficiently representative of English Religion to be competent for its historic rôle of the National Church.* English Religion as a whole is still, what it has been for more than three centuries, strongly Protestant. The Church of England cannot truly be so described. I had ever held with the late Bishop Creighton that "the English Church must be the religious organ of the English people," and I had not dissented from the corollary that "the general trend of the Church must be regulated by their wishes." I could never, indeed, have said with Bishop Creighton, in words which were much challenged at the time, and, perhaps, misunderstood, "*I am an Englishman first and a Churchman afterwards,*" but I had always assumed a fundamental harmony between the type of religion represented by the Church of England, and the hereditary Protestantism of the English People. This fundamental harmony I could now see had ceased. A Revision which would really express the mind of the Church of England as a spiritual society would be little likely

to command the approval of English public opinion as a whole. Prayer Book Revision, I saw, carried the fate of the Establishment itself. For now that the Enabling Act had organized the Church as a denomination, and equipped it with the machinery for formulating its mind apart from the national legislature, a direct collision between Church and State could not be long postponed. The denominational weakness of the Church of England, as revealed in the rolls of parochial Church electors, was equally surprising and disconcerting. At first it was supposed that the newness of the system explained the reluctance of the people to make use of it, but as the years passed, this plea ceased to possess any force. An attempt has been made to discount the sinister significance of the figures by arguing that there was no adequate machinery for effecting registration. But the parochial system included the entire population: the clergy were present in every parish, and the Bishops never ceased to urge them to be active in the matter. Yet the latest *Official Year-Book* states that out of a total population which exceeded 36,000,000, no more than 3,686,422 persons above the age of eighteen registered themselves in 1927 as members of the National Church, and that of these only 2,528,391 were communicants. The latter is not to be taken as accurate. It represents the

estimates of the incumbents, and can be no more than an approximation to the real number. But even if we accept them, how petty a proportion of the English people is included in the membership of the English Church ! When due allowance has been made for those communicants who are under age, it may be doubted whether more than one in thirteen of the parliamentary electors is a communicant Anglican.* For purposes of comparison it is not uninteresting to recall that, when James I ascended the throne in 1603, a general inquiry instituted by the Archbishop of Canterbury elicited the fact that, in a population of perhaps four millions, there were no fewer than 2,250,000 communicants.

If, then, the Church of England as a spiritual society had become a relatively small factor in the Nation, it could not but follow that its traditional character as a National Church had largely lost meaning, and that its legal Establishment might easily involve it in humiliating and even intolerable paradoxes. For if the mind of the Spiritual Society should fall out of accord with the sentiment of the Nation, and public opinion should be called upon to determine questions of grave

* The parliamentary electors include the representatives of Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland, as well as those of England, and, as we have been roughly reminded, they all claim the right to deal with the domestic concerns of the Church of England.

religious importance, might it not happen that the Church would be required to surrender into the hands of the State interests which lay wholly within the spiritual sphere? These contingencies have come within the range of experience, and we are now compelled, however reluctantly, to face the difficult but manifest requirement of spiritual allegiance. When the claim of Cæsar conflicts with the claim of God, there can be no doubt as to which claim must be rejected, however costly the rejection may be.

(2) *I saw that there had come into existence, and was quickly growing among English Churchmen, a new conception of the Church of England, or rather, perhaps, that an old conception was being re-cast in the light of experience and taking a larger character.* The Bishops sitting round the conference table at Lambeth were a microcosm of the Church itself. They represented a great variety of opinion, preference, religious habit, intellectual training, and spiritual ideal, but they were without any exception persuaded of the unique value of the English Church as embodying a version of Christ's Religion larger than any other now professed among Christians, and uniquely valuable in the present circumstances of the Christian Society as a whole. When the extent of variety is considered, the almost complete agreement which was finally reached becomes very significant. It

soon became apparent to me that this agreement would not, and could not, extend to the case of the extreme minorities, Romanizing and Protestant, which, though but a petty element in the Church, were so well organized, so energetic, and so vociferous, that they seemed to the public almost co-extensive with the Church itself. I often recalled the well-known words of Edmund Burke, which I had placed as a kind of text at the head of the signed article contributed to the *Times* in 1919:

“Because half a dozen grasshoppers make the field ring with their importunate chink, whilst thousands of great cattle reposed beneath the shadow of the British oak chew the cud and are silent, pray do not imagine that those who make the noise are the only inhabitants of the field—that, of course, they are many in number—or that, after all, they are other than the little, shrivelled, meagre, hopping, though loud and troublesome insects of the hour.”

But whereas, when I applied the words in 1919, I had the nation in my mind, I was coming to see that they were true only of the Church. The ‘importunate chink’ of Protestant agitators commended itself but too easily to the natural sloth of the multitude, and to the latent ‘No Popery’ sentiment which was in many minds the sole surviving fragment of their ancestral religion. It was certainly significant that the extreme and

oppugnant minorities grew ever more hostile to Revision, and, when in the end the House of Commons cast it aside, the fact was welcomed with exultation by the one faction and ill-concealed satisfaction by the other. The final catastrophe was effected by an alliance of dissentient factions within the Church with non-Anglicans without. The solidarity of the Church of England was emphasized by the circumstances in which Revision was ultimately defeated.

(3) *I saw that the Church had already been disestablished in the minds of the Bishops.* The idea of such a National Church as the legal Establishment implied had perished where it might have been thought to be most firmly rooted. Some of the Bishops had been translated from colonial sees, and were enamoured of the denominational freedom which they had once enjoyed. Many shared the Anglo-Catholic repugnance to the ecclesiastical courts as "Erastian." Most had associated themselves unreservedly with the "Life and Liberty" agitation. It dawned on me that, if the Establishment should again be attacked, there would be little zeal for its defence on the Episcopal Bench. I had often in the past spoken and written of the National Church with loyal enthusiasm, recalling its history with genuine pride, and glorying in its distinctive features. Now I was becoming tiresome and almost un-

intelligible, like a man who speaks in an obsolete dialect, and dilates on themes which have ceased to interest. The Establishment was becoming a ruin behind an imposing façade. It would

“ drop like the tower sublime

Of yesterday, which royally did wear

His crown of weeds, but could not even sustain

Some casual shout that broke the silent air,

Or the unimaginable touch of Time.”

Prayer Book Revision would compel both the State and the recalcitrant Anglo-Catholics to face the Church's claim to possess spiritual authority over its own members. For it would certainly demand from the State the surrender of its ecclesiastical control, usurped indeed, but entrenched in custom; and from the law-breaking clergy it would require an acceptance of discipline which would certainly involve the abandonment of an irrational but treasured individualism. Both had been assuming that the Church of England had no mind of its own, no definite and governing principles, no necessary limits to its traditional tolerance. Now, when the Church had deliberately and responsibly reviewed its system of doctrine and discipline, and formulated its decisions, it would be apparent that neither State nor “Ritualists” could avoid the implication which could alone make such procedure intelligible. The opening clause of the XXth

Article—"The Church hath power to decree Rites or Ceremonies, and authority in Controversies of Faith"—would become significant and operative. "The Church of England may be tolerant, but it must be *something*," wrote Bishop Creighton in 1899. Prayer Book Revision would make clear what the 'something' would be. In fact, the revision of the Prayer Book would strip the veil from a situation which was unreal and unwholesome. It could not but disclose the rift which had opened between the Church and the Nation. Would the Nation acquiesce in so strange a paradox as would be claiming its sanction? And, if not, would the Church accept so complete a subordination to the State? The rejection of the Revised Book, it was apparent to me, must raise the issue of Disestablishment in the clearest possible form. English Churchmen would be confronted with a question which must be answered.

I made no secret of these opinions. They found frequent expression in speeches and writings. As the time for introducing the Prayer Book Measure to Parliament drew near, I wrote "An Open Letter to a Peer," which was widely circulated, and attracted considerable attention. There I said that, if the Revised Prayer Book should be rejected by Parliament, "self-respect would compel English Churchmen to repudiate

a connexion with the State which could involve for the Church such humiliation and disadvantage." In the debate in the House of Lords I spoke with the same plainness. Here are my words :

"The Church of England seeks the authority of Parliament for the revised Book. Why does it do that? Solely because it is established. So far as the Church is concerned, the Book has already received complete validity, but as an Established Church we are properly and rightly required to seek Parliamentary sanction for our work. Your vote to-night will raise clearly and unmistakably the issue of what Establishment means.

"What is the great assumption on which Establishment must rest if it is to be compatible with the self-respect of a living Church? Is it not the goodwill of the Nation towards the Church? The Church is established because the Nation really believes that the Christian Church is a valuable element in its own life, that it assists the work of the State itself, that, in the happy phrase of the philosopher Coleridge, 'not without celestial observations can even terrestrial charts be accurately constructed.' That is the assumption on which the Establishment rests. If now this Measure, which the Church of England, uttering its corporate mind constitutionally, declares to be indispensable to the efficiency of its spiritual work, shall be rejected by Parliament, how can that assumption be any longer reasonably made? Establishment will have been disclosed as merely a restraint which no self-respecting Church could rightly endure."

Could language be plainer? Why, then, am I accused of inconsistency because, the rejection having been accomplished, I say that Disestablishment is necessary in the interest of the Church's self-respect? My words were at the time generally applauded by Churchmen. Was it supposed that I was 'bluffing'? In fact, they expressed the conclusion to which I had been driven slowly and with the utmost reluctance.

ADMISSIONS.

But enough. I do not wish to conclude my personal explanation on the note of mere apology. The charge of inconsistency, even of tergiversation, has been cast at me too often and from too many quarters in the course of my life not to compel me to ask myself, whether perchance it may have some explanation which I ought not to ignore. I allow myself to transcribe from my Journal a brief essay at self-interpretation which I was moved to write on October 29th, 1927. Its unflattering frankness of self-portraiture will, perhaps, excuse its inevitable egotism. Thus I wrote :

"Have I really changed since 1918, when I was the object of much vituperation as a 'heretick'? Do I indeed lie open to the charge of tergiversation? Can it be justly said of me that episcopal office has had the effect of transforming the 'liberal' into the 'conservative'? In plain words, ought I now to be standing with the

opposition to the Revised Prayer Book? Undoubtedly there are many who would return to all these questions a prompt and emphatic affirmative. How am I disposed to answer them myself? It is, I think, certainly but too often the case that, unintentionally and for the most part unwittingly, I convey a false, or at least an inadequate, impression of myself. Anglo-Catholics, Protestants, Modernists—all have claimed me as belonging to them on no better ground than my championship of them, or alliance with them, in certain situations. The defence of the Establishment in the eighties and nineties brought me into alliance—not membership, which I decisively rejected—with the E.C.U., and into collision with the Dissenters. This was the occasion of the ‘emissaries of Satan’ speech in 1892, which suggested that I was a vehement bigot of the ‘Catholic’ type. It was, of course, grotesquely false: and when, in 1895, I reduced the ceremonial in the Hospital Chapel at Ilford, and, in 1898, addressed to Lord Halifax the ‘Open Letter’ (published as a pamphlet under the title, *Cui bono?*), I was loudly denounced as a deserter. My steady opposition to the ‘Ritualists’ endeared me to the Protestants, who ignored my ‘Modernism,’ because I assisted their conflict against their rivals: and when the outcry was raised against me on doctrinal grounds in 1918, the Evangelicals, with the formidable exception of Dean Wace, stood aloof. But I had nothing in common with men so indifferent to the things of the mind and so fanatical in their religious opinions, and the discovery of the fact led them too to denounce me as a deserter. My ministry at S. Margaret’s, Westminster, and especially my defence of Thompson and Beeby, gave the impression that I was an ‘advanced liberal,’ whereas in both cases I was defending the rights of individuals against what I conceived to be oppressive

treatment, not adopting their specific opinions, from which, in fact, I differed. When I became a bishop, I set before myself the ideal of large-minded justice, and I accepted the obligation to 'hold the Church together.' Hence my determination to assist the passing of the Revised Prayer Book. I do not plead guilty to unworthy tergiversation at any point in my life, and I confess to no more changes of mind and policy than the changing circumstances of my life have compelled: but I admit that the accusations against me have a measure of plausibility, and are urged by men who are really ignorant of the facts, or genuinely unable to understand them. My deliberate judgment on myself as I review my life, is, not that I have changed too much, but that I have been too rigid, mentally and morally. More than once the phrase originally spoken of the younger Pitt, '*that he was cast and never grew,*' has been applied to me by unfriendly critics, and my conscience admits an element of justice in the application. My terseness of speech, and a certain vehemence of manner, mislead men into supposing that I am more convinced or wholehearted in any case that I take up than I am; and this circumstance also explains many disappointments. For in truth I am, with respect to most of the questions which excite religious people, a born Gallio; and only when large issues of truth and justice have been raised do I become keenly interested."

When I left Westminster for Durham in 1913, I received a parting gift which moved me deeply at the time, and which still remains one of my most cherished possessions. A beautifully bound copy of Aymer Vallance's *The Old Colleges of Oxford* was presented to me. It was enriched

with the following inscription, to which the Prolocutor and the Members of the Lower House of the Canterbury Convocation, with whom I had most constantly been associated, had appended their names :

Herberto Hensley Henson, S.T.P. per novem annos in Convocatione Cantuaria Veritatis, Justitiæ, Liberalitatis, Eloquenti et Strenuo Propugnatori, nunc ad septentriones fauste migranti, d.d. Amici, desiderantes gratulantes ad X, Kal. Mai. MCMXIII.

The flattering adjectives reflected rather the partial kindness of friendship than any merits of mine, but the conception of my character and purpose were just then, and I am not conscious of any behaviour since I left Westminster which has rendered them less just now.

II.

THE Establishment has been generally defended on three grounds, as providing a spiritual organ for the nation, as securing an effective provision of Christian teaching and pastorate throughout the country, and as preserving the clergy from clericalism, and so guaranteeing in the Church a broadly tolerant version of Christ's religion. It

may, perhaps, be worth while to consider these contentions dispassionately.

(i.) The conception of the Church as the Nation in its spiritual aspect has appealed powerfully to thoughtful and religious Englishmen. It has moved the ardour of the patriot, the eloquence of the orator, and the imaginative idealism of the poet. The notable development of historical studies within recent years has strengthened its hold on educated minds. The late Bishop Creighton may, perhaps, be taken as its weightiest and most effective exponent. "A national church," he said, "means a national recognition of the supreme law of God. Without a national church there cannot be that." He continued :

"In this ancient Christian land, in this country where the State has been educated by the Church, where civilization was begun by the Church, where to understand any institution whatever one has to go to ecclesiastical history to find its origins, such a breach with the past would be irreparable, though it would not damage the Church as much as it would the State, and it is the State I am thinking of. I am not ashamed to own that I am an Englishman first and a Churchman afterward. . . . But to my mind Church and State are not contradictory things. Church and State are the nation looked at from different points of view. The nation looked at from the secular side is the State, looked at from the religious side it is the Church, and separation between the two is impossible. The great danger which besets the modern State is that it should be so engrossed in the details of

the vast business which it has to carry on as to lose sight of leading principles. . . . If the State were to cut itself adrift from the Church, it would drop into the position of a committee which had only to do with business and did not concern itself with principles. I do not want to see the State belittled in this manner.” *

These words were spoken in 1899. Even at that time they must have seemed strangely incongruous with the realities of the national life. For the State was represented in an imperial Parliament which then—the Irish Free State had not yet been created—included representatives of the two islands of Great Britain and Ireland. The Church, of which the eloquent Bishop spoke, was established only in England and Wales. How could the established Church of England be the spiritual organ of three nations, of which two lay outside its jurisdiction? If Church and State were to be identified, at least their frontiers ought to correspond. Later, the Welsh dioceses were disestablished. How did the Bishop's theory of the essential identity of Church and State apply to Wales? In truth the Bishop's reasoning was quite obsolete. An insular argument cannot apply to an imperial State. Nor can the Bishop be acquitted of confusion of mind. For while in one place he insists on the identity of Church and State, and declares separation between them to be impossible; he yet, in another place,

* *Life*, ii. 384.

speaks of the State 'cutting itself adrift from the Church,' and emphasizes the belittlement of the State itself which the process would involve. It is difficult to follow the Bishop's argument. Why should Parliament be less concerned with 'principles' in the transaction of its 'business' after Disestablishment than before? Principles have their effect on business through their control of the individuals who transact it. Parliamentary action will always be just as Christian as the Christianity of its members makes possible. No more and no less. Establishment can have no effect one way or the other, save in so far as it can guarantee the Christian character of the Peers and Commoners. Presumably the legal exclusion of non-Anglicans from Parliament was directed to this end. History records its failure. No just or candid critic of Parliament can maintain that its conduct of business has become less determined by the principles of Christianity since it became secularized than it was before. In one respect, indeed, modern legislation is more Christian now than in the past. The humaneness of modern government has advanced *pari passu* with its secularization. The fact is capable of more than one explanation, but it certainly suffices to disallow Bishop Creighton's suggestion that Disestablishment would involve a disregard of principle in the performance of the State's 'business.'

At the time I did not feel disposed to criticize the Bishop's point of view. His identification of Church and State—the very assumption of the English Establishment—appealed to no one more strongly than to myself. In 1894 a well-known member of Parliament, Mr. Samuel Smith, had delivered an address at Rhyl on “The Religious Aspect of Disestablishment,” which he afterwards published as a pamphlet. It made me so angry that I put forth a reply entitled “The Real Aspect of Disestablishment.” It would not be easy to find a more ardent imaginative picture of the National Church, nor a deeper repugnance to the notion of Disestablishment :

“What the Church has effected for the nation through those centuries which you stigmatize so harshly may be, perhaps, illustrated by a scene very familiar to the members of the British Legislature. The grouped buildings of Westminster are a parable in stone. The institutions of the national life are all significantly symbolized. On one side, the Houses of Parliament and the ancient Hall of Westminster recall our representative and judicial institutions ; on another side, the famous public school worthily presents to view the fact of national education. Dean's Yard, with its numerous offices, each one the centre of some great philanthropic agency, may stand for the manifold activities of social reform : across the road are the National Society's depôt and a large Hospital, each bearing a distinctive witness too plain to be mistaken. Right in the centre, as a mother in the midst of

her children, stands the fairest and oldest member of the group, the great Abbey Church of Westminster, the creation and the symbol of the institution which has stimulated and developed all the rest, under whose protecting shadow all the rest grew and flourished, the National Church of England. Disestablishment and Disendowment, regarded in the light of history, appear, Sir, equivalent to the proposal to improve the aspect of the grouped buildings of Westminster by levelling to the ground the noblest of them all."

These ardent words were written in 1895. As I read them in 1929, I find them, not so much untrue, as exaggerated and irrelevant. Why should it imply any lack of appreciation of the historic achievements of the Church if I acknowledge that, in the vastly different circumstances of the modern world, the Church can no longer fill so great a place in the scheme of national life? I see now that we may easily cheat ourselves by the words we use. Neither Church nor State means to-day what it has meant in the past. The dividing line between them is otherwise traced. For the functions of the Medieval Church, in the age which witnessed the building of Westminster Abbey, have been largely taken over by the modern State. Disestablishment could only affect a fraction of what was once the Church, which, if the older significance attached to the word, would be more powerful than ever

before. The vast hierarchy of officials,—commissioned indeed by the modern State, but charged to carry on the manifold labours of the ancient Church,—which is concerned with the education, health, relief, recreation, and discipline of the nation, is a relatively greater factor in the community than was the Church in the Medieval State, during what are called the Ages of Faith. As Disestablishment would not really carry the significance of a national apostasy at home, so would it not necessarily inflict any loss of prestige to Christianity in the world at large. Of course, if the separation of the Church from the State were carried out, as in eighteenth-century France and in twentieth-century Russia, as part of a deliberate policy for the destruction of the Christian religion, the case would be different: but that is not likely in England, where the most earnest advocates of Disestablishment are among the most deeply religious people in the country. “A free Church in a free State” is an ecclesiastical ideal, and Disestablishment, if carried out in a just and conciliatory spirit, might well bear the aspect of a friendly arrangement. Moreover, foreigners are not so ignorant of the situation in England as to be deluded by the official prominence of the State Church. It was not thought inconsistent with the Christian character of the British Monarchy that the King’s representative

in India should be a Jew, nor am I aware that any ill consequences followed from the appointment. The Church in India has just been disestablished at its own request. Has the Empire suffered? May it not be the case, as many both in England and in India think, that the Empire has even been strengthened? We are not living in the age of the crusades. International politics are frankly secular. Treaties no more open with a reference to the holy and undivided Trinity.

(ii.) The famous Dr. Chalmers, preaching in 1830, declared the Establishment "to be not only a great Christian good, but one indispensable to the upholding of diffused Christianity throughout the land." His *Lectures on the Establishment and Endowment of National Churches*, published in 1838, are a powerful and eloquent plea for Church endowments. "Wherever we have a certain legal provision for the ministrations of Christianity there we have an establishment of Christianity in the land." Paley about the same time expressed a similar view in his *Moral and Political Philosophy*: "The division of the country into districts, and the stationing in each district a teacher of religion, forms the substantial part of every Church Establishment." But neither the parochial system nor the endowments had a civil origin, and both may be inde-

pendent of Establishment. The simplification of Establishment into the equivalent of Endowment was more attractive and convenient, than either sound or satisfying, but it was widely accepted. In the spring of 1838 Dr. Chalmers developed it in a series of lectures in London on "The True Theory of Religious Establishment," which aroused great enthusiasm. His audience consisted of the leading representatives of Metropolitan culture and piety. Nine prelates of the Church of England and at least 500 peers and members of Parliament are said to have attended his concluding lecture. The State had already ceased to concern itself directly with the endowment of religion, for the Parliamentary grants, amounting to £2,600,000, made in the early decades of the nineteenth century, have not been repeated. Save for the action of the Ecclesiastical Commission, which, however, deals with the Church's revenues only, the State has had no share in the provision of churches and clergy for the growing population. Disestablishment would leave the Church of England no more dependent on its own resources than it is at present, although those resources would be diminished by the amount confiscated. Undoubtedly, in the circumstances of the modern church, any reduction of material resources would be a grave matter; but it has only an indirect bearing on the issue

of Disestablishment. So far as the results of disendowment in Ireland and Wales can disclose the probable results of disendowment in England, there would be no failure to maintain the spiritual activities of the Church.

(iii.) The traditional comprehensiveness of the Church of England is, indeed, a precious possession, not lightly to be brought into jeopardy. How far can it be truly said to depend on Establishment? It is important to make clear what precisely it means. A 'go-as-you-please' church is not the same thing as a tolerant church, though both will have in common a generous comprehensiveness. The present paralysis of discipline in the Church of England has unquestionably made possible a licence of individualism both in doctrine and practice among the English clergy which has no parallel elsewhere in Christendom. Disestablishment might be expected to bring this licentious individualism under control, for the Church would be free to exercise its inherent spiritual authority, and to exact from its commissioned representatives a due regard for its principles and laws. Ever since the Reformation the system of the Church of England has been recognized to be uniquely tolerant and comprehensive. It is by this system, set out in its official standards, that the Church must be judged, not by the licentious disregard of them

which is now common. The 'Via Media' of Anglicanism cannot be so understood as to authorize contradictions, but rather as allowing a larger margin to private opinion than the more exacting systems with which it is contrasted. The line between essentials and non-essentials is otherwise drawn in the Church of England than in the Churches of Rome, Constantinople, Wittenburg and Geneva. It was so that the phrase was understood in the seventeenth century, when the famous Bishop Hall applied it to the Anglican position in the fierce controversy between Calvinists and Arminians. Fuller credits the authors of the Anglican Confession with the deliberate intention of "couching the Articles in general terms, not that falsehood should take shelter under cover thereof but to include all such dissenters as agreed in the fundamentals of religion within the comprehensiveness of the expressions."* Laud sanctioned the liberal interpretation which enabled the illustrious Chillingworth to subscribe the Thirty-nine Articles. Whatever may be thought of the particular application of the principle of interpretation which was followed by Newman in Tract XC, it cannot be denied that he could vindicate for it a respectable Anglican pedigree. Disestablishment would be less hostile to Anglican comprehensiveness than

* Vide *Church History*, ix. 22.

the paralyzed Establishment which now exists in England. For this negation of discipline makes possible such an organized propagandism as that of the Anglo-Catholics, the confessed object of which is to destroy the comprehensiveness of the Church of England, and to replace it by a rigid and exclusive system described as 'Catholic.'

The moderation of the Anglican standards has coexisted with the unique independence of the English incumbent, which has not been less potent in securing theological liberty. This unique independence was a by-product of the Reformation. Lay supremacy in ecclesiastical legislation went along with clerical supremacy in parochial administration. Private patronage and the freehold of the benefice have been the English parson's bulwarks against episcopal authority and congregational control. Undoubtedly both have been fruitful of scandal and are theoretically indefensible, but they have not been without incidental advantage. Disestablishment would certainly terminate both, but will Establishment secure the continuance of either? The position of the English clergyman has already been gravely altered by the Enabling Act, and by the legislation which that Act has made possible. Broadly the effect has been to reduce the incumbent's authority within his cure and to restrict his liberty of action. He tends to become rather

the minister of a congregation than the parson of a parish. His security of tenure is plainly menaced. Disestablishment could hardly do more. Meanwhile the English clergy themselves are changing; and the change is by no means favourable to the traditional comprehensiveness of the Church of England. It has been urged that the Establishment, by binding the clergy to national duties, has tended to foster in them a liberal spirit far removed from the narrow professionalism of the Romish priests and the Protestant pastors. So far as there is any force in this contention, it belongs rather to the past than to the present. The English Clergy have long been recognized as *sui generis* in Christendom. Their freedom from professionalism has not indeed always been connected with their spiritual efficiency. "I say it with great regret," wrote Bishop Burnet early in the eighteenth century, "I have observed the clergy in all the places through which I have travelled, Papists, Lutherans, Calvinists, and Dissenters, but of them all, our clergy were much the most remiss in their labours in private, and the least severe in their lives." A master-hand has described the "typical clergyman" of the pre-Evangelical period: "He was often much, very much to the society around him. When communication was so difficult and infrequent, he filled a place in the country life

of England which no one else could fill. He was often the patriarch of his parish, its ruler, its doctor, its lawyer, its magistrate, as well as its teacher, before whom vice trembles, and rebellion dared not show itself. The idea of the priest was not quite forgotten; but there was much—much even of what was good and useful—to obscure it. The beauty of the English Church in this time was its family life of purity and simplicity: its blot was quiet worldliness.” * Their intimate connexion with the land-owning class, their total lack of professional training, their social habits, and the multifariousness of their parochial employments stamped on the English incumbents a semi-secular character which made them far more men of the world than other Christian ministers. But these circumstances, to which whatever was truly distinctive of English clergymen must be attributed, had no necessary connexion with the Church’s Establishment, and have for the most part disappeared. The Oxford Movement has made the English Clergy professional. The gradual secularization of the State has curtailed their parochial activities. Finally, the decline of the land-owning class has gone far to destroy their social influence. It would not occur to most students of modern England to picture the English clergyman as

* Vide Church, *Oxford Movement*, p. 3.

conspicuously marked by breadth of culture, or intellectual sympathy, or religious tolerance, or social consequence. In all these respects Disestablishment would not affect them one way or the other.

III.

THE SCOTTISH PRECEDENT.

THE gravity of the present *impasse* is universally admitted, but there is a general reluctance to face the necessity of accepting Disestablishment as the way of escape. One Archbishop tells us that the existing relations of Church and State must be altered, and the other proclaims the actual situation to be 'intolerable,' but both seem to assume that the Establishment itself can be maintained. To the rank and file of Anglicans the very notion of Disestablishment is extremely repugnant, not indeed because much value is any longer attached to the incidents of Establishment, but because Disestablishment is associated in their minds with the formidable concomitant of Disendowment. Why, it is asked, should not Parliament grant to the Church of England such a full self-government as Parliament has already

granted to the Church of Scotland? In theory there can be no reason why Establishment and autonomy should not be as consistent in the southern division of Great Britain as in the northern. Nor is it wholly without importance that the theoretical compatibility of State recognition and Ecclesiastical liberty should be pressed on the public mind. When, however, we pass from theory to the lower plane of practical politics, the value of the Scottish parallel is quickly seen to be very small. For none of the conditions which made autonomy possible in Scotland is present in England. The difference between the two National Churches runs back to the circumstances and character of their several reformations. "England," says Professor Trevelyan with characteristic insight, "approached the Reformation through the Renaissance; Scotland approached the Renaissance through the Reformation." * The Scottish Reformation was a movement of spiritual revolt from the people, which succeeded in imposing itself on the government, and finally substituted its own system for that of the Medieval Church. The English Reformation was a reconstruction of the medieval system imposed by the government on the people, and in the end the essential features of the older polity were preserved in the Church of England.

* Vide *History of England*, p. 331.

Hence while the genius of the Scottish Church has been popular, that of the English Church has been political. The difference between the two reformed churches is well illustrated by two men who were contemporaries, and played a very similar part in the development of religion in their respective countries. Andrew Melville (1545-1622) did much to shape the presbyterian system in Scotland. Richard Bancroft (1544-1610) did much to shape the episcopal system in England. The Scottish divine is the very embodiment of religious democracy, to whom a monarch is no more than 'God's silly vassal.' The English prelate is the apologist of Divine Right alike on the episcopal bench and on the throne, in whose eyes 'No king, no bishop' is an axiom of sound government. Accordingly in Scotland the ecclesiastical power of the Crown has been very small, and in England very great. In Scotland the assumption of the National Establishment has been the distinctness of Church and State, in England it has been their identity. Thus there is nothing in Scotland answering to the distinctive features of the English Establishment—the Royal Supremacy, the presence of the bishops in the House of Lords, the final appellant authority of the Privy Council, the legislative supremacy of Parliament *in rebus spiritualibus*. To grant spiritual freedom to the Church of Scotland was

no more than giving legal form to a notorious fact. To do as much for the Church of England would involve legal and constitutional changes of a far-reaching character. Moreover, Scotland is comparatively remote, and its ecclesiastical fortunes do not interest or affect anybody outside Scotland itself; but the affairs of the Church of England are treated by Scots, Irish, and Welsh as domestic concerns of their own, and it is matter of fact that the rejection of the Prayer Book Measure in the House of Commons was effected by the votes of the non-English members. Nor even yet have we stated the full extent of the difference.

The Scottish people are the most religiously united of the Protestant communities; the English are the most divided. Ecclesiastical separations in Scotland have not seriously disturbed the doctrinal agreement of the nation. There is nothing north of the Tweed which answers to the profound doctrinal divergence between the English Nonconformist and our Anglo-Catholics. When the Scottish measure was presented to Parliament, it had behind it the practically undivided demand of Scottish Christians, and it was urged in the interest of ecclesiastical reunion. Who pretends that there is an unanimous, or even a general, desire among English Christians that the Church of England should be granted

complete autonomy? Such complete autonomy might in the long run facilitate the religious unity of the English Nation, but its immediate consequence might even have an opposite effect. Nobody would base the appeal for self-government on the interest of reunion between the Church and the Nonconformists. We conclude, therefore, that an attempt to ground an English policy on the Scottish precedent could not be reasonably expected to succeed.

REVISION OF THE ESTABLISHMENT.

It has been suggested that the relations between the Church of England and the State might be so altered that, without the shock and loss of Disestablishment, effective autonomy might be secured to the Church. Those who welcome this suggestion can scarcely have realized how considerable the alteration would have to be. Of an ancient Establishment menaced with revision the famous reply of the General of the Jesuits when proposals for reforming his Order were pressed on him, '*Sint ut sunt aut non sint*,' may be spoken.

Anomalies exist only so long as they are unchallenged. Once handled they perish. Much more than the procedure required by the Enabling Act would have to come into question. The re-casting of the Ecclesiastical Courts has been

already projected. A Commission has considered the matter, and presented a Report. I was myself a member of that Commission, and signed its Report with an important reservation as to the proposed constitution of the Final Court. "Such a final court as the Report recommends," I said, "appears to me quite incompatible with the Royal Supremacy as it has been hitherto understood in England, and indeed only to be defended on the medieval assumption of the spiritual incompetence of laymen as such." Does anybody believe that the scheme of legal reconstruction set out in the Report of the Ecclesiastical Courts Commission has the faintest chance of securing the approval of Parliament? But, even if it did, and the Ecclesiastical Courts became frankly denominational, there would yet remain the formidable question of the Crown Patronage. Probably no feature of the Establishment has a more anomalous aspect, and hardly any is more vehemently criticized, than the Crown nomination of bishops. The constitutionalizing of the monarchy has torn away from the present system its religious and historical justifications. A Christian Sovereign is one thing; a Prime Minister, who may be of any religion or of none, is quite another. It is with the latter that the actual selection really lies. The choice may be determined by considerations which have no reference

whatever to the interests of the Church, and may even be notoriously repugnant to its wishes. The ancient bishopricks can in a measure screen their subordination by the archaic fiction of the *cong   d'  lire* ; but in the modern bishopricks, which are rapidly increasing, there is nothing to mitigate or disguise the naked "Erastianism" of the procedure. A spiritual autonomy which left Crown patronage untouched would be plainly inadequate and unsatisfying. If, however, the legislative control of Parliament is to be abolished, the Royal Supremacy in the region of ecclesiastical law reduced to a shadow, and the Crown patronage conditioned in its exercise by the approval of the Church, what effective meaning will the Establishment retain ? Will not the sum of the changes be indistinguishable from Disestablishment ? In fact, is not the policy of revising the Establishment really equivalent to the policy of Disestablishment without Disendowment ? There are, I know, some churchmen who would boldly advocate that policy. Why, they ask, should it be assumed that Disestablishment must involve Disendowment ? We may freely admit that there is no essential connexion between the two ; but there is an *invariable* connexion. In politics the distinction between what is *invariable* and what is *essential* is hardly worth making. It must suffice to say that the association of Disestablish-

ment with Disendowment is so probable as to amount almost to a certainty. We should be unwise to proceed on any other supposition. Parliament is not likely to disregard its own recent precedents. When the Church of Ireland was disestablished, it was also disendowed. When, just before the War, the four Welsh dioceses were torn from the Church of England and disestablished, they were also disendowed. The Church of England cannot reasonably expect different treatment.

THE INTEREST OF THE EMPIRE.

It has been urged in some quarters that the Disestablishment of the Church of England is no merely national issue, but must be regarded as one in which the Empire as a whole is directly concerned. Ecclesiastical establishment and imperial interest have not, indeed, been generally associated. In the Colonies the Church has been disestablished, and quite recently the policy has been extended to India. So far as the Empire outside England and Scotland is concerned, Disestablishment has been the prevailing policy. But it is said that while everywhere else the results of Disestablishment have been merely local, in England they would be conterminous with the Empire. Presumably the reference is to the Act of Settlement which secures the Protestant

Succession, and requires the Sovereign to be a communicant in the Church of England. But there is no reason whatever why these provisions should not be maintained if Parliament thinks it desirable that they should. Nor is it to be forgotten that with Disestablishment the ecclesiastical authority of the Crown would cease, and the danger of such abuse of the Crown Patronage as ranged the Church of England on the side of the Revolution would disappear.

The principal reason why the accession of a Roman Catholic Sovereign was held by Englishmen of every description of Protestantism to be inconsistent with the security of the kingdom, has disappeared with the political power of the Papacy and the Roman Catholic character of the French State. When Louis XIV, the *Roi Soleil*, cast the beams of his sinister magnificence over Europe, Rome and France were in English minds (not wholly without injustice to the Pope even then) inseparable. But now? What conceivable danger to the political independence of Britain attaches to the French Republic or the Roman Papacy? There was (apart from the American Colonies which now form the United States) little that could be called an Empire subject to the English King when the Act of Settlement was passed. To-day the British Empire is distributed all over the world, and of its multifarious

inhabitants the vast majority are neither Anglican nor Christian. When the Protestant Succession was secured by statute, Monarchy was still in principle personal, and there were formidable competitors to the reigning Sovereign. To-day, there is no pretender to the English Crown anywhere in the world. Looked at from every point of view the Act of Settlement, like Magna Carta, is more interesting and venerable than relevant to actual conditions of the national life. Save for the obvious undesirableness of any breach between the Sovereign and the religious sentiment of his British subjects, it is not very easy to explain what public interest demands that the King of England should be the only man in his Empire who is not personally free to determine his own spiritual allegiance.

The coronation of the Sovereign with religious ceremonial would plainly be as congruous with public feeling, as suitable in itself, and as easily arranged after Disestablishment as it is now ; and nothing could prevent the Houses of Parliament from appointing chaplains, and opening their business with prayer, if they so desired.

CONCLUSION.

Whether the present crisis will pass without bringing the crazy edifice of the Establishment to the ground, or not, may be doubtful. Men, especially religious and patriotic men, cling to their causes long after they know them to be hopeless. One thing is certain. There is no future for the Establishment. The end is in sight. The situation created by the recent extensions of the franchise is too paradoxical to continue. A National Church of which no more than one in thirteen of the citizens acknowledges membership, is a pyramid set on its apex which must tumble at the first push. From the Church's point of view, the situation is as perilous as it is precarious. A democratic State must express the will, and reflect the moods of the majority of its citizens. In the relatively small electorate—about 8,000,000—of the prae-war period, the Church formed a considerable, even a dominating factor; but in the vast electorate—more than three times as numerous—which now returns the members of the House of Commons, the Church is a minor element, and may easily become a negligible quantity.

Can fair-minded and considering men of whatever religious or political description expect the Church of England to acquiesce in the claim of

Scottish Presbyterians, Irish Protestants, and Welsh Nonconformists to vote on questions which could not properly concern them, and yet go to the roots of the Church's spiritual life? Ought English Churchmen for the future to accept the necessity of conciliating the fierce anti-Roman prejudice of Northern Ireland, the hereditary anti-episcopal feeling of Presbyterian Scotland, and the inbred antipathies of Welsh and English Nonconformists, and thus limiting their ecclesiastical action by the consent of those who neither share their beliefs, nor value their traditions? Such questions have only to be seriously asked in order to be decisively answered. The Church of England would be indeed—as Erastians have ever affirmed—nothing more than a national institution, a department of the Civil Service, the creature and parasite of the English State, if it did not at all costs repudiate an Establishment which confined its corporate action within such limits, and stamped on Anglican Christianity a character so destitute of moral impressiveness.

If, then, we are indeed shut up to the alternative—Disestablishment or the existing situation—it would appear that English Churchmen should compel themselves honestly to face the question, whether it may not be their duty to accept Disestablishment. Since some change is confessedly necessary, and none other seems adequate to our

present necessity, we ought very seriously to consider our duty with respect to it. For my part, after long and anxious reflection, I have reached the definite conclusion that my voice and vote must be given in favour of Disestablishment.

I do not allow myself to imagine that the Church can gain spiritual freedom without making a sacrifice of its material interests. How great that sacrifice must be will be determined by the Nation. Why should we assume that the English Nation would treat the English Church harshly, or even ungenerously?

Neither the Church nor the Nation gains by postponing the solution of a problem which has now become extremely urgent. Why should not the leaders of Church and State consent to lift the question of Disestablishment above the plane of normal party conflict, and to answer it in the spirit of a large-minded patriotism which, while bringing to an end the Establishment of the Church of England, would inflict no incapacitating injury and bequeath to the future no exasperating memories.

It is no merely clerical interest that is now involved, nor one that is merely denominational. Far deeper questions are stirred than lawyers are concerned to answer: far larger interests than politicians are accustomed to discuss. I may apply to our present situation some words written

prophetically in 1622 by the illustrious Bishop Hall, when the first mutterings of the storm which would lay the Church and Monarchy prostrate in a common ruin were beginning to be audible to attentive ears :

“There needs no prophetic spirit to discern by a small cloud, there is a storm coming towards our Church ; such a one as shall not only drench our plumes, but shake our peace. Already do we see the sky thicken, and hear the winds whistle hollow afar off, and feel all the presage of a tempest, which the late example of our neighbours bids us fear.”

Our neighbours in Russia are not so remote as to make their experiences altogether without value for our guidance, nor may we rest in the assumption that the Church of England has some immunity from ill fortune which other Churches do not possess. Are English Churchmen generally prepared to face a future which may be harsh beyond the precedents which they know ?

* The intimate association of Church and State in England from the dim beginnings of the national history, amounting in the past to a practical identification, had many advantages when the policy of the State was confessedly Christian, and no morality save that of Christ's Religion claimed the acceptance of civilized man-

* I allow myself to repeat what I wrote in the *Bishoprick* in August, 1928.

kind. Long after the Faith of the Church had been assailed in the modern world, its Morality retained an assured supremacy. The Agnostic, while repudiating the Christian Creed, held with John Stuart Mill that "not, even now, would it be easy, even for an unbeliever, to find a better translation of the rule of virtue from the abstract into the concrete, than to endeavour so to live that Christ would approve our life." *

But all this has changed within recent years. The State has become effectively secularized, and now, under the fiction of neutrality, undermines the indispensable postulates of the Christian Religion. The Morality of Christ is heavily challenged throughout Christendom, and in some important departments (*e.g.* marriage) has been openly repudiated. In these circumstances the ancient intimacy of Church and State has created a formidable danger by predisposing the unreflecting multitude to assume that what the State enacts must necessarily accord with what the Church teaches. The ordinary Englishman is not accustomed to distinguish between a Moral Law, Divine in origin, authority, and sanction, which the Church has received from the Hands of Christ, and must at all costs maintain, and the current morality of English Society, which may or may not accord with the Christian Law, and

* *Three Essays on Religion*, p. 255.

which alone determines the legislation of the State and the 'use and wont' of popular life. It follows that to assert the inherent authority of the Church is ultimately to affirm the principle of Christ's supremacy in human life, and that to acquiesce in such a subordination of the Church to the State as was boldly affirmed in the House of Commons, and was plainly implied by its rejection of the Revised Prayer Book, is ultimately to allow the claim of Cæsar to override and wholly to submerge the claim of God. Seen from this point of view, the issue of Disestablishment acquires religious significance, and the duty of Churchmen to face it frankly becomes a moral obligation.

The poison of "Erastianism" has penetrated deeply, and the "Erastian" habit of thought and speech has carried some Anglican divines to strange lengths. Their attitude towards the mere suggestion of Disestablishment discloses a temper of mind which would appear as remote from reason as from religion. "For most Modernists," writes the Editor of the *Modern Churchman*, "the Disestablishment of the English Church would mean the cessation of all further interest in it. Disestablishment would be followed inevitably by Disruption, and we should have to look to other methods, organisations and institutions for the advancement of the Kingdom of God

among the English people." I should be sorry indeed to think that any of my fellow-churchmen, whether they call themselves Modernists or not, would be found willing to accept this account of their sentiments at this difficult and searching time. Rather I would believe that, with whatever reluctance or regret, they would range themselves with the Bishops in asserting, though at a heavy cost of material advantage, the spiritual independence of that Branch of Christ's Church to which they have been called in His Providence to belong. Whatever fortunes may be reserved for the Church of England, may God in mercy preserve it from the ignominious security of a tame Church in a secularized State ! It is a fate against which the Divine Founder at the first warned His disciples : " Ye are the salt of the earth : but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted ? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men."

HERBERT DUNELM.

*Auckland Castle,
Lent, 1929.*

SECOND QUADRENNIAL VISITATION OF DURHAM DIOCESE.

THE BISHOP'S CHARGE.

PART I.

INHERENT SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

ESTABLISHMENT.

REVEREND AND DEAR BRETHREN,

Just a year has elapsed since the Prayer Book Measure, 1927, was for the first time rejected by the House of Commons. You will remember that the two Archbishops, after consultation with the Bishops and with their full concurrence, addressed a letter to the Press, declaring their refusal to "accept as final" the adverse vote in Parliament, adding these memorable words :

"The Bishops fully recognize that there are circumstances in which it would be their duty to take action in accordance with the Church's inherent spiritual authority. We realize this duty, and are ready, if need be, to fulfil it."

I propose to take as the subject of my Second Quadrennial Charge "the inherent spiritual

authority of the Church of England," what it is, and what it implies. We shall be led to consider the relation of the Church to the State, the question of Establishment, on the one hand; and the relation of the Church to the Clergy who form its executive, the question of Discipline, on the other. Both the action of the House of Commons in rejecting the Prayer Book Measure, and the refusal of clergymen to obey either the rubricks or the Bishops, imply a repudiation of the Church's inherent authority. The very phrase 'inherent spiritual authority' carries our thoughts back to the first beginnings of the Christian Church, for that which is inherent must certainly be original, belonging to the very essence of the society which possesses it.

The question whether Christ Himself founded the visible Church has been debated, but it has no real importance for us, since it is certain that He chose and trained the Apostles for this very purpose, that they in due course should become the Church's founders. If the Gospels may be accepted as a trustworthy version of His Teaching, Christ did certainly contemplate the foundation of the visible Church in the future, and indicated what its character would be. On more than one occasion He sharply distinguished it from the familiar type of terrestrial societies. In using conventional expressions with respect to it, He

was careful to guard Himself against conventional understandings. If He called the Church a '*Kingdom*,' He was careful to explain that it was not "*of this world*": if He spake of positions of authority within that Kingdom, "*seats on His right hand and on His left hand in His glory*," He immediately explained that these dignities did not correspond to the dreams of earthly ambition. The system of the Gentiles was not the counterpart of the system of His Kingdom, nor was the basis of honour the same. He pointed significantly to Himself, the King, and warned His followers to correlate their notions of His Kingdom with the witness of His life. "*Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them: and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it is not so among you: but whosoever would become great among you, shall be your minister: and whosoever would be first among you, shall be servant of all. For verily the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.*" He certainly established within the Church a ministry, ruling by the title of a Divine Commission, and specifically empowered to exercise a disciplinary control over His disciples; but, as certainly, He refused to authorize in the case of that ministry those hierarchical pretensions which were conspicuously character-

istic of the established Jewish religion. He expounded the constitution, scope, purpose, fortune, and destiny of His Church in a series of parables. He provided for its coherence and order, not only by appointing the Apostolic Ministry, but also by instituting the two ‘Sacraments of the Gospel,’ solemn public ceremonies of admission into the visible Church, and perpetual re-affirmation of membership. Thus He created the relations out of which, in the course of time, the problems of “Establishment” have emerged. For an ordered, visible Church, bound together by sacramental bonds, and subject to a Divine law of conduct, could not escape the necessity of intercourse with the powers of human society. Christ nowhere speaks precisely on this subject, but He everywhere contemplates it, and on many occasions seems to put forward broad principles for the future guidance of His disciples. Thus He indicates by suggestive metaphors the distinctiveness and ubiquity of the Church as an influence within the mass of the human race. On the one hand, the Christian society is “*the light of the world*,” comparable in its clear-cut distinctiveness to “*a city set on a hill*”: on the other hand, it is the “*salt of the earth*,” likened in the silence and universality of its operations to the “*leaven*” in a lump of dough. It is evident on the surface of the evangelical

history that Christ contemplated the sharpest antagonism between the Church and the established powers of human society. The latest utterances recorded in the Synoptic Gospels and in the record of S. John are sombre with prophecies of persecution. While, however, He thus foresaw an immediate future of heavy trial, it is equally evident that He declared the indestructible vitality of the afflicted Church and her ultimate triumph. For He explicitly assured His disciples of the perpetual presence in their midst of a Divine Power—the Spirit of Truth, the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete—Who should console, teach, sanctify, and strengthen them throughout history. Thus the historic society called in the Creed ‘the Holy Catholick Church’ was by the Founder pictured as a Divinely-protected, Divinely-ordered, Divinely-inspired thing, destined, through much tribulation, manifold failure, and (what is not less plainly declared) reiterated apostasy, to achieve the conquest of the human race, and so to fulfil the Purpose of God’s Redemptive Charity.

The precepts of Christ must always be read in the light of His Example. While He was actually engaged in training the Apostles for their momentous task, and establishing the broad outlines of an organization which should outlast human society, He was personally subject to the

Roman government of Palestine. The claims of that government to Jewish recognition were at the time much discussed in religious circles : to repudiate them was matter of conscience to many of Christ's contemporaries : they were formally submitted to Christ's judgment by the representatives of the Jewish Hierarchy. His answer has ever been regarded as a luminous declaration of the essential principle at stake in the problems of "Establishment." Holding the silver denarius, stamped with the effigy of Tiberius, in His Hand, He asked, "*Whose is this image and superscription?*" and when the Pharisees and Herodians replied that they were '*Cæsar's*,' He rejoined, "*Render, therefore, unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's.*"

The problems of "Establishment" have all grown out of the inevitable question as to the true boundaries of these high rival claims on Christian recognition. It is vital to remember that the Divine Founder of the Christian Church established the Divine right of both. The famous passage in S. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, in which he declares the religious obligation of obedience to the civil power, has its origin and its authority in the doctrine of Christ Himself. "*Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers. For there is no power but of God : and*

the powers that be are ordained of God. Therefore he that resisteth the power, withstandeth the ordinance of God: and they that withstand shall receive to themselves judgment." But it is not less evident that S. Peter and the Apostles were faithfully echoing the Teaching of their Lord when, on the threshold of Christian history, they gave conspicuous example of disobedience to constituted authority by encountering the prohibition of the high priest with the pregnant declaration, "*we must obey God rather than men.*" The adjustment of these contradictory attitudes of religious submission and conscientious revolt has been the crux of ecclesiastical history from the first century until the present time.*

If two authorities, equally possessed of Divine Right to human obedience, can yet come into collision, it is apparent that the Divine Right can in neither case be unlimited, but must be restricted in its rightful exercise. It cannot be pleaded outside its proper sphere. The perennial strife between Church and State has arisen precisely

* I have availed myself of the first section of the article on 'Establishment,' which I wrote nearly thirty years ago: and which was published in the volume which I edited under the title *Church Problems: A View of Modern Anglicanism*, by various authors; edited by H. Hensley Henson, Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford. London. John Murray, 1900. Of the fourteen writers who collaborated in that volume, seven are now dead, and six became bishops.

from the transgressing of the appointed limits by one or other. From time to time the attempt has been made to 'cut the Gordian knot' by subjecting one authority to the other, making the Church supreme over the State, as by medieval Popes and Scottish Calvinists, or by making the State supreme over the Church, as by Byzantine Emperors, German Princes, and our own Henry VIII. But the problem is too complicated for such crude and obvious solution. Bishop Stubbs has warned us against underrating the difficulty of finding any really satisfactory solution of a problem, which history seems to show to be insoluble. I quote his words because I can find none other either so luminous or so authoritative :

“ A perfect solution of the problem involves the old question of the identity between the good man and the good citizen, as well as the modern ideal of a free church within a free state. Religion, morality, and law, overlap one another in almost every region of human action ; they approach their common subject-matter from different points and legislate for it with different sanctions. The idea of perfect harmony between them seems to imply an amount of subordination which is scarcely compatible with freedom ; the idea of complete disjunction implies either the certainty of conflict on some if not all parts of the common field of work, or the abdication, on the one part or the other, of some duty which according to its own ideal it is bound to fulfil. The church, for instance, cannot engross the work of education without

some danger to liberty; the state cannot engross it without some danger to religion; the work of the church without liberty loses half its value; the state without religion does only half its work. And this is only an illustration of what is true throughout. The individual conscience, the spiritual aspiration, the moral system, the legal enactment, will never, in a world of mixed character, work consistently or harmoniously in all points." *

From such considerations it would seem to follow that a large tolerance of friction between Church and State ought to go along with a vigilant insistence on inherent rights; for, while both the constitution of human nature, and the conditions of man's life in society, compel a certain overlapping of the secular and the spiritual, which must needs from time to time create difficult and embarrassing situations (so that in truth the man who will not be patient of difficulty in determining his duty must needs go out of the world), yet it remains the case that *both* the inevitably associated authorities are Divine and exclusive, and cannot therefore be sacrificed in any particular of their legitimate claims without moral fault. While, however, both Church and State claim obedience within their respective spheres by Divine Right, it is manifest that there is an order of obligation in their respective claims. When they conflict, the one must be preferred

* Vide Stubbs, *Constitutional History*, vol. iii., p. 296.

to the other. The language in which Christ postulated the problem implied this. For when the two claims are proposed as the claim of Cæsar and the claim of God, it is apparent that no equality of obligation exists. One is supreme over the other. "*We must obey God rather than men.*" There can be no question when the issue is clear: but circumstances may so obscure the issue, that even brave and honest men may find it hard to distinguish between the two claimants, which is Cæsar, and which is God. When, indeed, as in the Apostolic Age, the State was indifferent, or, as in the times before the conversion of Constantine, hostile, the problem of a Christian's civic duty might be difficult because of the cruel sacrifices which it might compel, but it could hardly be difficult because of its obscurity. The line of demarcation between his secular and his spiritual obligation could not be mistaken. The special complexity of the problem as it presents itself within Christendom arises from the circumstance, that the State recognizes that very authority of Christ over human life which the Church exists to assert and make effective. Over the High Altar of Westminster Abbey Dean Stanley caused the words to be inscribed, "*The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ.*" That might be called the Idea of Establishment, and so far as it

is embodied in political institutions it tends to obscure the frontiers of Church and State.

Two opposite errors have confused the Christian conscience, and immersed the Church in grievous sin—Clericalism, or the subordination of the spiritual society to the exorbitant claims of the clergy, and Erastianism, or the subordination of the spiritual society to the exorbitant claims of the State. Of the first, I need not now speak. It was faced and (so far as was possible) finally removed at the Reformation, when the competence of the Christian laity for the handling of spiritual issues was affirmed, and acted upon. The prominence of Parliament in the process of shaping the "Establishment," the Royal Supremacy, and the existence of the House of Laity, disallow the assumptions of clericalism, medieval and modern.

Of Erastianism, perhaps, I may usefully speak. The Oxford Dictionary defines an Erastian as "*one who maintains the complete subordination of the ecclesiastical to the secular power.*" It is one of the humours of history that Erastus, who might not unfairly be described as a man whose view of the Church was exceptionally spiritual, should have given his name to a doctrine which robbed the Church of all spiritual authority whatever. Hobbes has better right than Erastus to be called the author of Erastianism, his famous

Leviathan published in 1651 is the very Bible of the heresy. Its distinctive doctrine is indicated by the frontispiece. The State is symbolized by a giant man, whose body is made up of many small ones. The Colossus is crowned, and holds a sword in its right hand, and a crozier in its left, and it rises out of a country with a city in the foreground, which it dominates and protects. Above it is written the description of Leviathan in the Book of Job: "*Non est potestas super terram quae comparetur ei,*" and below the space is divided into three columns; that on the left, underneath the sword, represents the symbols of the civil power: a castle, a crown, a cannon, a sheaf of arms, and a battle; that on the right, underneath the crozier, represents the symbols of the ecclesiastical power: a church, a mitre, a thunderbolt, logic, and a court or assembly of clergy; that in the centre contains the title of the book. The suggestion is apparent and unmistakable. The State is indivisibly one: the Church is incontestably subject. Excommunication is as much Leviathan's weapon as the cannon; Leviathan smites his enemies by the decisions of his ecclesiastics as truly as by the weapons of his soldiers. There is no power but Leviathan; the powers that be are ordained by Leviathan. The picture inevitably suggests comparison with the well-known frontispiece of the Great Bible,

ascribed to Holbein. Henry VIII has the place of Leviathan, and the artist has followed a similar arrangement. The sovereign in both pictures delegates his powers to the officials of Church and State. But the whole spirit of the pictures is different. The one is personal, the other impersonal: the one is religious, the other is secular. The one indicates the apotheosis of the king, the other the rationalizing of the monarchy: the one is Erastian in the sense of Cranmer, the other is Erastian in the sense of Hobbes. Only one Divine Right, that of the King, may be tolerated in the community:

“And, therefore, none but kings can put into their titles (a mark of their submission to God only) *Dei Gratia Rex*, etc. Bishops ought to say in the beginning of their mandates, ‘By the favour of the king’s Majesty, bishop of such a diocese’; or as civil ministers, ‘In His Majesty’s Name.’ For in saying, *Divina providentia*, which is the same with *Divina gratia*, though disguised, they deny to have received their authority from the civil state, and slyly slip off the collar of their civil subjection, contrary to the unity and defence of the commonwealth.”

It is not unimportant to notice that the Leviathan was much applauded by the generation which carried through the Caroline Establishment. Pepys relates under the year 1668 that “Hobbs’s Leviathan” was “now mightily called for”; and that he had to give 24s. for a second-

hand copy originally published for 8s.; a new copy cost 30s., "it being a book the bishops will not let be printed again." It was, in truth, Hobbes who gave to Erastianism the definitely unfavourable sense which the term has ever since carried in the usage of religious men: for everywhere Hobbism was assumed to be essentially identical with Erastianism, and Hobbesian principles, as Bramhall argued in his *Catching of Leviathan*, "were destructive to Christianity and all religion." The doctrine of the *Leviathan* found frank, though in many cases unconscious, expression, during the debates in the House of Commons on the Prayer Book Measure; and nowhere more frank than in the speeches of the Home Secretary, who led the opposition to its calamitous victory. It is indeed apparent that only on the Erastian view of the State's religious omnipotence, could the action of the House of Commons be justified, and only on the Erastian assumption of the Church's complete subordination to the State, could that action be acquiesced in. The Ecclesiastical Committee had pronounced that the Prayer Book Measure was unexceptionable from the legal and constitutional point of view. No royal prerogative was affected: no civic rights were invaded: no questions of property were raised. The issues at stake were patently and confessedly spiritual,

affecting the doctrine, worship, and discipline of the Church of England. The Members of the House of Commons allowed themselves to debate all these matters, and to set aside as irrelevant or worthless both the decisions of the Church, and the declarations of the Bishops.

Such an exercise of the Veto, secured to the Houses of Parliament by the Enabling Act, is precisely equivalent to direct legislation. By forbidding the Church to disallow what it desired to disallow, the House of Commons did in effect order it to allow what it disapproved. By forbidding the Church to sanction what it desired to sanction, the House of Commons did in effect order it to maintain prohibitions which it disapproved. Under such conditions the legislative activity of the Church Assembly becomes farcical. Not the mind of the Church may find expression in the Church's Doctrine, Worship, and Discipline, but the mind of the House of Commons. Mr. Birrell, himself a Nonconformist, has indicated the grossness of the paradox and the magnitude of the degradation :

“With the truth of Church of England doctrines or principles the House of Commons has no concern. It is not a branch of any Church, divided or undivided : and it would be frankly unbearable were an assembly so constituted to express any opinion as to the truth or falsehood of any article of religion.” *

* Vide *The Nation and Athenæum*, June 23rd, 1928.

It only needs to set side by side the teaching of the New Testament about the Church, and the view of the Church of England freely expressed in the House of Commons, and implied in its vote, to see that, if the Church of England be indeed a true part of the Spiritual Society founded by the Apostles, it cannot possibly recognize in such an assembly as the House of Commons any competence to determine its creed and the manner of its worship. No considering Christian could dissent from the declaration made by the late Archbishop of Canterbury in the name of all the Bishops, even (strange and almost inexplicable as it must appear) including those who co-operated with the House of Commons in defeating the Revision of the Prayer Book :

“ It is a fundamental principle that the Church—that is, the Bishops together with the clergy and the laity—must in the last resort, when its mind has been fully ascertained retain its inalienable right, in loyalty to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to formulate its faith in Him and to arrange the expression of that holy faith in its forms of worship.”

The language is curiously cautious, but the general sense is clear enough.

How, we cannot but ask, has it come to be possible that reasonable and religious men (for such were many who voted in the House of Commons against the Prayer Book Measure) came to lend themselves to so gross a violation

of the Church's evident and inalienable right? This "intolerable" situation is only explicable when seen as the outcome of a long and complicated history, which has had the effect of confusing issues and obscuring principles.

The Archbishop of Canterbury in his powerful and eloquent sermon in Canterbury Cathedral on the occasion of his enthronement offered this explanation of the present *impasse* in a brief passage of far-reaching significance :

"I cannot doubt that thoughtful men will come to see that in view of the immense changes which have passed over the life both of the nation and of the Church, the relations of Church and State which reflected the conditions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries cannot remain unchanged : and also that some effective principle of authority within the Church itself must be accepted if freedom is not to become licence, and the reality of fellowship within one body is to be maintained."

The Archbishop of York, writing in the *Manchester Churchman*, expresses himself thus :

"The rejection of the Prayer Book Measure has created a situation which is in the strict and proper sense of the word intolerable ; it is a situation in which we cannot acquiesce."

Since the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the religious situation in England has been transformed by a series of changes, legal, constitutional, social, and intellectual, which have stricken

the Establishment with practical paralysis, and made effective self-government essential to the Church of England. The rejection of the Prayer Book Measure, 1928, has demonstrated that such self-government as was conferred by the Enabling Act, 1919, is fictional, and that in reality the Church is subject to the control of Parliament even in spiritual concerns. Therefore, the existing situation is literally intolerable, and cannot rightly be acquiesced in by English Churchmen.

Look first at the legal and constitutional changes. It will suffice to indicate those which were effected by the Revolution in the end of the seventeenth century, and those which have flowed from the triumph of democracy in the nineteenth. The Elizabethan Settlement, which is substantially embodied in the present Establishment, rested on the assumption that the Church and the Nation were properly identical, that dissent was a danger to civil order as well as a violation of ecclesiastical discipline, that the Sovereign, as Head of the Christian Nation, was also, by Divine appointment, Supreme Governor of the National Church. The Reformed Church of England was thus bound closely to the Monarchy, so closely that the fall of the Monarchy involved also the fall of the Church. At the Restoration both were restored, but with a difference, which was rather felt than formulated.

The prestige of Monarchy had been irreparably damaged by the success of the Great Rebellion, and the Church of England could no longer be reasonably identified with the English Nation. At the Revolution of 1688 the legal situation was made to harmonize with the facts. The Act of Settlement declared the Monarchy to be Protestant and Parliamentary. The Act of Toleration legalized Dissent from the Established Church. With the accession of the Hanoverian Dynasty the new situation was further developed. The Royal Supremacy over the Church shared the fate of the rest of the King's prerogatives. All ceased to be personal, and became constitutional, being administered on the advice of a Prime Minister who was himself responsible to Parliament.

Until the triumph of democracy in the nineteenth century, the English State system remained—save for the introduction of Scottish Presbyterians into Parliament by the Act of Union in 1707—theoretically Anglican. The Test and Corporation Acts excluded non-Anglicans from any share in government, central and municipal.*

* The Cavalier Parliament of 1662 included Presbyterians and other non-Anglicans, but it imposed on itself the rule that all its members should receive the Sacrament according to the rite of the Church of England. The Test and Corporation Acts were aimed primarily at Roman Catholics, but they excluded other non-Anglicans. The latter were enabled to sit in

But such exclusion offended against the cherished principle of democracy, viz. that no citizen should be excluded from the service of the State on the ground of his religious profession. Accordingly, the Anglican monopoly of government was destroyed piecemeal. First Nonconformists, then Roman Catholics, then Jews, finally men of any religion and of none, were admitted to the Legislature, and given a share in the control which Parliament exercised over the Church of England. The wheel had gone full circle. So far from citizenship and churchmanship being identical, the breach between them was made as wide as possible. Thus the theory of the English Establishment was reduced to chaos, and the Establishment only continued because its anomalies were mitigated by immemorial custom and transfigured by pious sentiment, and because the tenure of the ancient ecclesiastical endowments, on which the maintenance of the parochial system mainly depended, was generally held to be contingent on its continuance. The case for the Establishment tended to become nakedly utilitarian.

In view of the history, it is not surprising that the relations of the Church of England and Parliament have grown steadily worse, until, at

Parliament as "occasional conformists," being protected from legal penalties by an annual indemnity Act.

the present time, they have reached complete deadlock. From this situation the Enabling Act, 1919, was intended to provide an escape. Its advocates believed that they had secured for the Church of England an effective measure of self-government. For nine years the Act has functioned, and much legislation has taken place by means of the machinery which it provides. The veto of Parliament had only been used in two cases, both of which lay within the sphere of legitimate parliamentary action. More than twenty measures passed by the Church Assembly had received the Royal Assent; and it seemed a reasonable assumption that Parliament would not interfere with the spiritual action of the Church. This assumption was put to the test in the case of the Prayer Book Measure, and it was found to be groundless. In rejecting a Measure which dealt directly with spiritual issues, the House of Commons, acting within its legal rights, demonstrated that the Church of England was in bondage to the State, and could not so much as determine its own Order of Holy Communion without the permission of Parliament. This is the position which the Archbishop of York describes very justly as "in the strict and proper sense of the word intolerable."

The cruel and humiliating situation, into which the Church of England has been brought so

unexpectedly, has necessarily subjected the Establishment to a close and anxious scrutiny. Is it really possible so to amend the present system as to secure to the Church of England the indispensable boon of genuine spiritual liberty? I should be lacking in candour if I did not say plainly that I do not think the answer can be ultimately in the affirmative. Establishment has become an anomaly which is ceasing to function tolerably. Every anomaly carries the seeds of death, for it exists on sufferance, and once challenged must needs fall. The union between a Christian Church and a modern democratic State cannot but be precarious, and may at any moment become unworkable. When the nation was bound to the profession of Christianity, and government, local and central, was reserved to Churchmen, Establishment (though lending itself to astonishing abuses) did not lack effective justifications. But now, when the mass of the people lies outside the membership of the Christian Society in any of its organized sections, and no religious conditions whatever attach to civic rights, Establishment is incapable of defence. An anomaly which has ceased to work well becomes intolerable, both to the reason of the citizen, and to the conscience of the Churchman. I am therefore brought, though very reluctantly, to the conclusion, that we must look to Disestablishment for

the final solution of our problem. Unpalatable as the prospect cannot but be, and formidable as the loss of property incidental to Disestablishment certainly will be, I think we ought not to allow considerations of material advantage to weigh in the scale against our spiritual franchise.

PART II.

INHERENT SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

DISCIPLINE.

REVEREND AND DEAR BRETHREN,

The 'inherent spiritual authority of the Church,' which must be vindicated at all costs against the aggression of the State, must be vindicated also and at all costs against the lawless individualism of the clergy. Discipline within is the concomitant of independence without. There can be no real freedom for a disordered Church, for it manufactures its own chains. If it cannot command obedience from its own clergy, it cannot command the respect of the nation. It is notorious that the present conflict between Church and State had its immediate cause in the scandalous, long-continued, and still continuing disorder within the Church itself. The scandal of clerical disobedience is not affected by the considerations which may go far to explain it, certainly not by the casuistic pleas offered in its justification: for the first are not generally

understood, and the last do not impress ordinary layfolk as morally respectable. None will dispute the statement of the Royal Commissioners of 1906 :

“That a section of clergymen should, with however good intentions, conspicuously disobey the law, and continue to do so with impunity, is not only an offence against public order, but also a scandal to religion and a cause of weakness to the Church of England.” *

The disorder which has its origin in the partial obsolescence of the law under which the work of the clergy proceeds, and in the unsatisfactory character of the courts by which discipline must finally be enforced, does not necessarily imply any disloyalty in the law-breaking clergy, who are seen to be hardly free agents, nor, when justly considered, ought it to bring discredit on the Church, which is plainly shown to be the victim of its legal Establishment. But the case is far otherwise with the disorder, which is explained, and can only be explained, by a definite repudiation on the part of the law-breaking clergy of the Church's ‘inherent spiritual authority,’ and by a practical nullification of all the securities for clerical obedience which the Church possesses. The character and the gravity of this kind of disorder are indicated by the description as

* Vide Report, p. 76.

specifically 'catholick' of pleas and procedures which are in essence and in effect nakedly individualistic, and cannot possibly consist with any genuine recognition of the Church of England as a living branch of the Holy Catholick Church. Students of the Oxford Movement know that, together with much of priceless spiritual value, it contained within itself principles and tendencies which were not really consistent with membership of the Church of England. The considerable secessions to Rome in the decade which followed Newman's submission to the Papacy relieved the Tractarian Movement of an enfeebling element, and enabled the followers of Pusey and Keble to make good their position as loyal members of the Church of England. But the Roman leaven was not altogether removed, and in the closing years of the nineteenth century it made its presence felt in extensive and intractable disobedience to the law. Dr. Figgis describes the situation thus :

"There arose in the Church a party small, for the most part unlearned, but intensely enthusiastic, whose ideals were purely those of Latin Christianity, and whose conception of the Church was in the last resort ultramontane.

"Creighton saw earlier than most people that the real question at issue was not whether the Church of England had done this or that in the past, not even

whether it had the right to do this and that, but whether there was a Church of England at all." *

Bishop Creighton was certainly right. The very being of the Church of England as a spiritual society is at stake when its authority over its own clergy is challenged. The Reformation raised necessarily the question of authority. By what agent could the indispensable change be effected? The attempt to reform the Church by General Councils had been made in the fifteenth century, and had ended in total failure. In the sixteenth no one seriously believed in the possibility of a Reformation by the Popes. The Papacy in the hands of the Renaissance Pontiffs was the corruptest part of the Church, and, as the source of effective reformation, was simply unthinkable. Church and State were indissolubly bound together in the minds of medieval thinkers. Failing the Pope, there was the Emperor as the Divinely authorized instrument of ecclesiastical reformation. In the sixteenth century the imperial prerogatives had been transferred to the national monarchs. If the Church in England was to be reformed, it could only be by means of the King's authority. Mr. Pollard, our greatest living authority on the history of the sixteenth century, states the situation thus :

* Vide *Churches in the Modern State*, p. 236.

“The whole jurisdiction of the Church was derived in theory from the Pope; when Wolsey wished to reform the monasteries he had to seek authority from Leo X.; the Archbishop of Canterbury held a court at Lambeth and exercised juridical powers, but he did so as *legatus natus* of the Apostolic See, and not as archbishop, and this authority could at any time be superseded by that of a *legatus a latere*, as Warham’s was by Wolsey’s. It was not his own but the delegated jurisdiction of another. Bishops and archbishops were only the channels of a jurisdiction flowing from a papal fountain. Henry charged Warham in 1532 with *praemunire* because he had consecrated the Bishop of S. Asaph before the Bishop’s temporalities had been restored. The Archbishop in reply stated that he merely acted as commissary of the Pope, ‘the act was the Pope’s act,’ and he had no discretion of his own. He was bound to consecrate as soon as the Bishop had been declared such in consistory at Rome. Chapters might elect, the Archbishop might consecrate, and the King might restore the temporalities; but none of these things gave a bishop jurisdiction. There were in truth two and only two sources of power and jurisdiction, the temporal sovereign and the Pope; reformation must be effected by the one or the other. Wolsey had ideas of a national ecclesiastical reformation, but he could have gone no farther than the Pope, who gave him his authority, permitted. Had the Church in England transgressed that limit, it would have become dead in schism, and Wolsey’s jurisdiction would have *ipso facto* ceased. Hence the fundamental impossibility of Wolsey’s scheme; hence the ultimate resort to the only alternative, a reformation by the temporal sovereign, which Wycliffe had advocated and which the Anglicans of the sixteenth

century justified by deriving the royal supremacy from the authority conceded by the early Fathers to the Roman Emperor—an authority prior to the Pope's." *

We may observe in passing that the whole process of Reformation, whether carried through by the Pope or by the Sovereign, was in the sixteenth century a domestic process of the Catholick Church. There was no question anywhere of recognizing any ecclesiastical authority in a non-Christian State. No precedent can be found in the History of the Reformation for the exercise of spiritual functions by the modern secularized State. Reformation effected by the Christian State involved a repudiation of the Papal supremacy, and of the conception of the Catholick Church which that supremacy presupposed. The Church *in* England, no longer linked in a common system with the rest of the Western Church, became necessarily henceforth the Church *of* England, independent of extra-national control, claiming and exercising spiritual authority of its own. That authority cannot indeed be unlimited, nor can the independence of the Church of England be other than a temporary phase.

"The Christian religion," writes Bishop Stubbs, "is a historical and Catholic religion; and a perfect adjust-

* Vide *Henry VIII*, pp. 269 f.

ment of relations with foreign churches would seem to be a necessary adjunct to the perfect constitution of the single communion at home.” *

But over its own members, and within its due limits, the spiritual authority of the Church of England is valid. In the XXXIVth Article it is thus defined :

“ Every particular or national Church hath authority to ordain, change, and abolish, ceremonies or rites of the Church ordained only by man’s authority, so that all things be done to edifying.”

This Article must be read in conjunction with Article XX, which treats ‘ Of the Authority of the Church ’ :

“ The Church hath power to decree Rites or Ceremonies, and authority in Controversies of Faith : and yet it is not lawful for the Church to ordain any thing that is contrary to God’s Word written, neither may it so expound one place of Scripture, that it be repugnant to another. Wherefore, although the Church be a witness and a keeper of holy Writ, yet, as it ought not to decree any thing against the same, so besides the same ought it not to enforce any thing to be believed for necessity of Salvation.”

The VIth Article affirms “ the Sufficiency of the holy Scriptures for Salvation.” Nor is this all ; as if to make doubly sure that the reality,

* Vide *Constitutional History*, iii. 297.

nature, and limits of the Church's spiritual authority are clearly understood, the substance of these Articles is introduced into the Ordination Vows.

This spiritual authority thus carefully limited was exercised by the Church of England at the Reformation. The entire system of Catholic faith and order as it existed in England at the close of the Middle Ages was brought under review, revised carefully and drastically, and re-stated in a simpler form which, while retaining the essential features of the older system, abolished its specifically medieval characteristics, doctrinal and disciplinary. The process was gradual, troubled, often interrupted, and never wholly satisfying. There was a large fringe of irreconcilable discontent left when it was at length completed, and this provided the source of much future trouble. At every stage the ecclesiastical movement was bound into the changing fortunes of the national life. But in the end the completed process emerged, cohered, gathered strength, and finally established itself in the acceptance of the English people. We speak of this completed process as '*the Elizabethan Settlement*,' and justly, for the system which was established in the early years of Elizabeth's reign, has remained substantially unchanged until our own time. The Anglican standards—the Prayer

Book and the Thirty-nine Articles, in the first rank, and, in the second, the Homilies, Jewel's *Apology*, and Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity*—are all Elizabethan, and the Canons of 1604 were enacted within a few months of the great Queen's death. Every English clergyman is ordained on the specific understanding that he accepts this revised version of Catholic Christianity, and recognizes his own vocation to the sacred ministry as conveyed therein. To the candidate for Ordination to the Diaconate, the Bishop addresses this question before laying on his hands in Ordination :

“ Do you think that you are truly called, according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the due order of this Realm, to the Ministry of the Church ? ”

The same question in slightly varied form is repeated in the Ordering of Priests and the Consecration of Bishops. Moreover, the Priest at his Ordination is required to pledge himself to fulfil his ministry on the lines laid down for him by the Church of England. Could anything be more specific and unmistakable than the language of the Ordinal on this point ?

“ Will you then give your faithful diligence always so to Minister the Doctrine and Sacraments, and the Discipline of Christ as the Lord hath commanded, *and as this Church and Realm hath received the same*, according

to the Commandments of God : so that you may teach the people committed to your Cure and Charge with all diligence to keep and observe the same ?

“ *Answer.* I will so do, by the help of the Lord.”

You will not have forgotten the promises which you were required to make when you were instituted to the cure of souls. The excellent practice, now generally adopted in England, of instituting incumbents publicly, in the presence of their parishioners, tends to emphasize the true character of those promises as setting forth the terms of the covenant between the parson and the people of his parish. Every parish clergyman enters on his solemn responsibilities on the clear and openly-acknowledged understanding, that he will fulfil his ministry in the parish in accordance with the formulated mind of the Church of England. The Declaration of Assent received its present form as recently as 1865, and cannot therefore be discounted on the ground of its archaic character. It must be taken to represent the intention of the modern Church of England, and as such it must be practically interpreted. Every incumbent in England holds office on this understanding, which he accepted in these words :

“ I do solemnly make the following Declaration—I assent to the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion, and to the Book of Common Prayer, and to the Ordering of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. I believe the Doctrine of the

Church of England, as therein set forth, to be agreeable to the Word of God : and in public Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments, I will use the Form in the said book prescribed, and none other, except so far as shall be ordered by lawful authority.”

You will realize the importance of the concluding phrase. The necessity of departing from a Prayer Book, compiled in the sixteenth century, and last revised in the seventeenth, is now everywhere conceded. Many of the rubricks are obsolete, some are impracticable. the prescribed services are often unsuitable for modern use, and sometimes even objectionable to modern consciences. Since the issue of the Report of the Royal Commission on Ecclesiastical Discipline, 1906, all this is freely admitted. But the “lawful authority,” which alone is competent to “order” departures from the Prayer Book, can hardly be that of the incumbent. If there be difficulty about understanding the ‘use and practice’ of the Book, the clergyman is bidden to betake himself to his Bishop. The Preface ‘Concerning the Services of the Church’ is clear on this point :

“ And forasmuch as nothing can be so plainly set forth, but doubts may arise in the use and practice of the same ; to appease all such diversity (if any arise) and for the resolution of all doubts, concerning the manner how to understand, do, and execute, the things contained in this Book ; the parties that so doubt, or diversely take any

thing, shall always resort to the Bishop of the Diocese, who by his discretion shall take order for the quieting and appeasing of the same; so that the same order be not contrary to any thing contained in this Book. And if the Bishop of the Diocese be in doubt, then he may send for the resolution thereof to the Archbishop."

If, then, the incumbent be unable to be his own interpreter of doubtful rubricks, it is obvious that he cannot reasonably be suffered to be his own legislator, providing alternative and additional services for use in his parish church, cancelling existing rubricks, and enacting new ones as he may think advisable. The grotesque and anarchic individualism of his conduct cannot really be affected by his description of his innovations as "Catholick," nor may they be authenticated to the congregation by elaborate and even learned arguments to justify the name. The fact remains that he has no 'lawful authority' to supplement, amend, and even set aside the services of the Prayer Book. Only 'the inherent spiritual authority' of the Church of England itself, exercised constitutionally, can match the Church's present needs. That authority which revised the medieval system of faith and order, compiled the Prayer Book, and enacted the Articles, cannot be inadequate for the tasks of revising the Book, and supplementing it, as the needs of the modern Church may require.

The revision of the Prayer Book was taken in hand some twenty years ago, and was finally carried to a successful conclusion last year. We now have in our hands a revised Prayer Book, commended to our acceptance by the authority of the Church of England, not in the distant past, but in our own time. It did, indeed, fail to commend itself to the House of Commons, and, therefore, it lacks that legal authorization which Parliament alone can confer, but this circumstance cannot affect in the smallest degree its spiritual authority and consequent claim to our reverent regard.

On March 26th, 1927, I addressed to the Diocesan Conference the following words which now I desire to recall and to reaffirm :

“ One thing seems to me certain. Whether the ‘ Composite Book ’ is legalized or not, its influence on the Church of England must be very great. It provides an authoritative answer to the question, which the prevailing disorder within the Church has raised in many minds, What does the Church of England stand for in Christendom to-day? No genuine Christian is excluded from the Church of England save only those who definitely repudiate its authority, and, under the name and pretence of Catholicism, claim and exercise an individual licence which no self-respecting Church could ever tolerate in its official representatives.” *

* Vide *The Book and the Vote*, p. 38, where the whole address is printed.

At their meeting in Lambeth Palace on September 28th, 1928, the Archbishops and Bishops agreed almost unanimously on the following statement, which I desire to emphasize as indicating the manner in which the Revised Prayer Book ought now to be treated :

“ During the present emergency, and until further order be taken, the Bishops, having in view the approval given by the Houses of Convocation and the Church Assembly to the proposals for deviations from and additions to the Book of 1662 set forth in the Book of 1928, cannot regard as inconsistent with loyalty to the principles of the Church of England the use of such additions or deviations as fall within the limits of these proposals. For the same reason they must regard as inconsistent with such loyalty the use of any other deviations from or additions to the Book of 1662. Accordingly the Bishops in the exercise of their legal or administrative discretion will be guided by the proposals approved in 1928 by the Houses of Convocation and by the Church Assembly, and will endeavour to secure that practices which are consistent neither with the Book of 1662 nor with the Book of 1928 shall cease.

“ Moreover, the Bishops regard it as a governing principle that no departure from the Book of 1662 be permitted in the public services of the Church unless the people, as represented in the Parochial Church Council, or, in the case of the Occasional Offices, the parties concerned, be in agreement with the incumbent.”

You will note that the Bishops do not authorize the Revised Prayer Book for use in the churches.

To do that would be to arrogate to themselves a power which they do not possess, and to set an example of law-breaking which would be highly indecent. But the Bishops must needs address themselves to the actual situation, in which, it is matter of notoriety that, for varying reasons and with varying measures of justification, the rubrics of the Prayer Book of 1662 are being broken, in most, probably in all, the parish churches throughout the country. These illegalities differ in gravity almost infinitely. The Bishops propose the Revised Prayer Book as the standard by which illegalities shall be tested whether they are, or are not, consistent with loyalty to the principles of the Church of England. They tell the clergy that they will themselves accept that standard 'in the exercise of their legal or administrative discretion,' that is, that they will use the power vested in them by the law to protect from prosecution those clergymen who restrict their departures from the law of 1662 to what is sanctioned by the Revised Book of 1928. They add their determination to exert themselves to suppress all illegalities which transgress these limits. Finally, they emphasize as "a governing principle," that no departures from the Prayer Book of 1662, even though confessedly consistent with loyalty to the principles of the Church of England, shall be permitted

unless the incumbent is in agreement with the Parochial Church Council, in the case of the public services, and with the parties concerned in the case of the Occasional Offices. To the statement of the Archbishops and Bishops let me add some personal counsels.

I. Exert yourselves to get the Revised Prayer Book into the hands of your parishioners. Urge them to purchase copies, and make sure that copies are easily obtainable.

II. Use the Revised Prayer Book whenever you find yourself compelled for some good and sufficient reason to supplement, or even lay aside, the legal provision. The Occasional Prayers, the Order for the Burial of a Child, and the Form for use on Ash Wednesday and at other times, and much else, may sometimes be used with obvious fitness, and with real spiritual advantage.

III. Make the Revised Prayer Book the basis for clear teaching as to the distinctive doctrine of the Anglican Church on some controverted points, with respect to which there is at the present time very evident need for instruction that shall be both definite and authoritative. Here at least, in the Revised Prayer Book, you have the deliberate judgment of the Church of England, and that for loyal English Churchmen ought to suffice. Take two examples of obvious importance.

(i) The new form of the question about Holy Scripture in the Ordering of Deacons gives occasion for correcting the mechanical literalism which still enchains too many of our people when they read the Bible, and which certainly lies at the root of most of the panics which disturb the world of popular Protestantism.

(ii) Take again the vexed question of Reservation. The rubricks which permit, and regulate, the reserving of the Consecrated Elements so emphasize the single purpose for which such reservation is allowed as to make it perfectly evident that no cultus of the Reserved Sacrament is consistent with the sacramental doctrine of the Church of England. Under the existing Book no reservation for any purpose is permitted, and the Preface of the Revised Book states that the new permission implies no change in the old doctrine.

“If the minds of any be troubled because we have allowed another Order of Holy Communion as well as the old, and have made further provision for the communion of the sick let them not think that we mean thereby any change of doctrine or intend that the Sacrament be used otherwise than as our Lord himself appointed.”

There has never lived a more loyal Anglican than our illustrious Bishop Cosin, and certainly no more weighty witness to the sacramental teaching of the Church of England in the age

which witnessed the Caroline revision of the Elizabethan Prayer Book can be found. He had been led by the troubled course of his life to take a notable part in the sacramental controversy with the Roman Church, and he was also a dominating influence on the process of Prayer Book Revision. His words seem to me exactly to express what was, and is, the teaching of the Church of England :

“ We also deny that the elements still retain the nature of sacraments, when not used according to divine institution, that is, given by Christ’s ministers, and received by His people : so that Christ in the consecrated bread ought not, cannot, be kept and preserved to be carried about, because He is present only to the communicants.”*

This teaching is quite consistent with the charitable rule which permits reservation for the communion of the sick and dying, but quite decisively disallows such cultus of the Reserved Sacrament as obtains in the Roman Catholic Church, and, we may observe, is quite clearly prohibited by the Revised Prayer Book. For your sacramental teaching, therefore, you will find the Revised Book very useful, and I counsel you to make full use of it.

IV. Take advantage of the new Calendar to interest your people in the history of the Catholic

* Vide Cosin’s Works, iv. 174 : Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology.

Church as a whole. I can well believe that a thoughtful parish priest, who would be at the pains of preparing lectures on the famous Saints, whose names have been deliberately included in the revised Calendar, would not only refresh and enrich his own mind, but would assist his people to understand the splendour of their Catholic heritage. The revised Prayer Book, honestly and intelligently expounded in the parishes, will clear away many popular errors about the Church of England, and prove itself an educative instrument of great value. When it shall have been supplemented by a revision of the Thirty-nine Articles, which will purge that famous confession of the obsolete features inevitable in a composition of the sixteenth century, and make it a faithful exposition of the mind of the modern English Church, the Anglican will have in his hands an authoritative presentation of the version of the Catholick Religion which the Anglican Communion throughout the world professes. He will, for the first time, know what is properly meant by the traditional description of Anglicanism as a 'via media,' and, in short, he will understand what the Anglican Communion stands for in the divided Christian Fellowship of the modern world.

The present position of the Thirty-nine Articles is highly paradoxical and perplexing.

Indeed it is difficult to imagine a stronger contrast than that between the importance attached to the Thirty-nine Articles by the law, and the disregard and even contempt with which they are commonly treated. The law is thus stated :

“ Every person instituted or collated to any benefice with cure of souls or licensed to a perpetual curacy shall, on the first Lord’s day on which he officiates, or on such other Lord’s day as the ordinary may appoint and allow, publicly and openly, in the presence of the congregation there assembled, read the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion, and immediately after reading the same make the declaration of assent, adding after the words ‘ articles of religion ’ in the declaration, the words ‘ which I have now read before you.’ And if any person so instituted, collated, or licensed, wilfully fails to comply with this provision, he shall absolutely forfeit his benefice or perpetual curacy.” *

This condition of their tenure of their benefices must often have exercised the thought, and perhaps troubled the consciences, of English clergymen, and, if I devote some part of my present Charge to considering its proper significance, it is because I desire to satisfy legitimate scruples, and to condemn some current sophistries.

The Thirty-nine Articles received their present form in 1571, when they formed an essential part of the ‘ Elizabethan Settlement,’ and were

* Vide Cripps, *The Law relating to the Church and Clergy*, Seventh Edition, p. 470, A.D. 1921.

enforced on the clergy by a rigid form of subscription, for which a milder form was substituted in 1865. The Church of the nineteenth century deliberately required "assent" to the Confession drafted in the sixteenth. We cannot, therefore, put the Thirty-nine Articles aside as obsolete, effectively cancelled by the lapse of time since their composition. Our 'assent' to them solemnly exacted after public reading as a condition of our tenure of office must mean something.

It is noteworthy that the Lambeth Conference of 1920 speaks of the Book of Common Prayer as "the Anglican standard of doctrine and practice," omitting all reference to the Thirty-nine Articles, which yet, according to the Royal Declaration prefaced to them in the Prayer Book, "do contain the true Doctrine of the Church of England agreeable to God's Word," and which are still so regarded by the law. How low their authority has sunk among the English clergy may be seen in the language of an address numerously signed which was a few years ago presented to the Eastern Patriarch :

"We account the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion as a document of secondary importance concerned with local controversies of the sixteenth century, and to be interpreted in accordance with the faith of the Universal Church of which the English Church is but a part."

I may observe in passing that this statement is curiously misleading: for not only may "the local controversies of the sixteenth century" raise issues of permanent importance, but also the very object of the Articles must be presumed to be to show what "the faith of the Universal Church" requires with reference to those issues.*

Bishop Gore, writing in 1925, said that "we should strenuously and especially strive for the removal of the XXXIX Articles of Religion from the position of authoritative standards (in any sense) of belief or practice in the Anglican Church," and he certainly gives expression to a view widely held in the Church of England at the present time. He would have the Articles "relegated to the position of historical documents." What does this precisely mean? All documents are in some sense 'historical.' The phrase may mean no more than that the Articles are what they pretend to be, namely a faithful version, neither mutilated nor interpolated, of the Articles authorized in 1571, and continually imposed on the English Clergy until the present time. This leaves unaffected the question of their present significance. The clergy can hardly regard the

* N.B. In a Sermon preached in Westminster Abbey on June 18th, 1922, and published in the volume, *In Defence of the English Church*, I have discussed this clerical statement at some length. I desire to reaffirm the opinions there expressed.

Thirty-nine Articles as no more relevant to their didactic obligations than the Six Articles of 1539, or the Lambeth Articles of 1575, which are equally to be described as 'historical documents.' The mere volume and continuity of official acceptance, which attach to this particular 'historical document,' clothe it with unique significance which no student of Anglicanism can ignore, and which no English Clergyman can wisely forget. History certifies that such has been the authorized teaching of the Church of England from the sixteenth century to the twentieth. Thus in some sense it may be said, that the Articles provide the '*contemporanea expositio*' of the Ordinal, which indeed incorporates much of them into the Ordination Vows. They are the formulated 'platform' of the Reformed Church, disclosing the principles and the character of its reformation. How could any man receive Ordination from the Church of England, and repudiate its 'platform'?

If, in a divided Christendom, the distinctive character of the Church of England is to be made known, and its independence is to be justified, how can the formulation of its 'platform' as a Reformed Church be dispensed with? It is as the Church's Confession, not as the individual Christian's Creed, that the document is to be judged. The distinction was early perceived, and insisted on.

Thus Archbishop Ussher :—

“ We do not suffer any man to reject the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England at his pleasure ; yet neither do we look upon them as essentials of saving faith, or legacies of Christ and His Apostles ; but in a mean, as pious opinions fitted for the preservation of unity ; neither do we oblige any man to *believe* them, but only not to *contradict* them.” *

The generous latitude of the English Confession was matter of pride to the Anglicans of the seventeenth century. Fuller quaintly explains it thus :

“ Children’s clothes ought to be made of the biggest, because afterwards their bodies will grow up to their garments. Thus the articles of the English protestant church, in the infancy thereof, they thought good to draw up in general terms, foreseeing that posterity would grow up to fill the same ; I mean these holy men did prudently prediscover that differences of judgments would unavoidably happen in the church, and were loath to unchurch any, to drive them off from an ecclesiastical communion for such petty differences ; which made them pen the Articles in comprehensive words, to take in all who, differing in the branches, meet in the root of the same religion.”

“ Thus one may say,” wrote Dr. Hort, “ that for at least two and a half centuries, these Articles

* Vide *Schism Guarded*.

† Vide *Church History of Britain*, Bk. ix. s. 52.

have been accepted by at least the greatest part of the English clergy rather for their general purport than for all their details of language.” * The Anglican Confession, framed in the sixteenth century, is rather inadequate than obsolete, at least its obsolescence affects rather its form than its substance, save in the specifically theological Articles, where the questions dealt with have passed out of the range of general concern. It would not be reasonable to adduce the authority of the Thirty-nine Articles in the twentieth century without allowing frankly for the circumstances which destroy their relevancy to distinctively modern problems.

The broad lines of the Anglican position remain unaltered—the sufficiency of the holy Scriptures for salvation (VI); the authority of the Three Creeds (VIII); the fallibility of General Councils (XXI); the use of the vernacular in public worship (XXIV); Communion in both kinds (XXX); the liberty of the clergy to marry like other Christian men (XXXII); the right of a particular or national church to order its own affairs (XXXIV); the threefold Ministry (XXXVI); the Royal Supremacy and the repudiation of the Pope’s jurisdiction in England (XXXVII).

The need for ‘Confessions’ will, perhaps, only

* Vide *Life and Letters*, ii. 324.

cease with the recovery of Catholick Unity. Ancient documents admit of a larger latitude of interpretation than modern; and, so far, the interest of comprehension is served by retaining the Thirty-nine Articles as they are. Their revision will be a delicate and most difficult task, which could hardly be wisely attempted in an atmosphere of controversy. We are yet far from the time when the revision could be effected with any chance of success.

“Meantime subscription to the Articles must be regarded as made, subject to such qualifications as are necessitated by the new light thrown upon certain doctrines in recent times.” *

We are happy in this diocese of Durham in having little of that clerical lawlessness which has prevailed recently in some other dioceses. I beg of you all not only for yourselves to maintain the good tradition in this respect which you have received, but also to try to make an intelligent loyalty the habit of your people. If any sacrifice of personal preference, or even of customary practice, be required in the case of any of you in order that you may fulfil your ministry henceforth in frank obedience to the godly discipline of the Church of England, I beg you not to refuse that sacrifice. “*God is not a God of*

* Vide *Prayer Book Dictionary*, p. 52.

confusion, but of peace," said S. Paul, when he would restrain the disorders of the Church of Corinth. We cannot measure the moral disadvantage which has befallen the Church of England as the result of clerical disobedience to constituted authority in recent years. Let us by God's help determine to make sure that at least this stumbling-block shall not hinder our approach to the people. We have been called to fulfil our ministry in circumstances of extreme, perhaps unprecedented, difficulty. Under the unlifting cloud of social dislocation caused by economic crisis the work of the Clergy has proceeded with little relief and multiplied disappointments. It may be that sterner trials yet are in store for the Church of England. Let us look to it that, in the day of the Lord's Battle, there be nothing in ourselves to daunt our courage and paralyze our sword-arm.

PART III.

PAROCHIAL MINISTRY

I.

REVEREND AND DEAR BRETHREN,

The parochial system is the most conspicuous and the most important part of the Church's organization. It had its origin in the earliest antiquity of the English nation, and, as it arose independently of the State's action, so it persists—as in Ireland and Wales—when the State's recognition of it has ceased. The English clergyman is ordained for the specific work of a parish priest. His Vows at Ordination express the characteristic duties and the broad responsibilities of parochial pastorate. The conception of his office solemnly pressed on him by the ordaining Bishop requires for its practical expression such a 'cure of souls' as the English parson receives. He is entrusted with much more than the charge of a congregation. The territorial basis for ecclesiastical organization implied in the parochial system reflects an agricultural society, of which the members live in villages and hamlets

scattered over a considerable area. It is in the country, therefore, that the parochial system is most efficient. In literature and tradition the parish means the country parish. In towns parochial frontiers are difficult for the people to perceive, and still more difficult for the clergy to defend. Family ties, personal preferences, the magnetic attraction of eloquent preachers, the lure of services distinguished by excellent singing or eccentric incidents or abnormally lawless ceremonies, cannot be confined within local limits, nor will congregational recruiting stop short at the 'bounds' which the choir-boys 'beat' on Ascension Day. Accordingly, the parochial system has never worked well in towns large enough to include more than one parish; and the larger the town, the worse the parochial system works. Industrialism, which created the vast communities distinctive of modern England, has conflicted sharply with parochial ideas and methods, and, indeed, has gone far to bring the parochial system to complete paralysis. It is noteworthy that the Enabling Act allows members of the congregation who are not resident within the parish to be included in the rolls of parochial church electors on equal terms with the parishioners, and has stripped the ancient vestry of its ecclesiastical character. No part of England was worse equipped than the

county of Durham for sustaining the transition from an agricultural to an industrial ordering of society. The parishes were few, reflecting the sparseness of the population throughout the Middle Ages, and indeed through the whole period before the nineteenth century. Of the 272 parishes which now constitute the diocese of Durham, only 82 were in existence when the nineteenth century began. Of these no less than 19 have still less than 500 inhabitants apiece. Of the 190 modern parishes, all but 31 have been constituted since 1850. My predecessors, Bishop Baring (1861-1879) and Bishop Lightfoot (1879-1889), were actively engaged throughout their tenure of the See with the work of forming new parishes. Both were men of notable public spirit. Baring, writes Creighton, "though a wealthy man, lived with great simplicity, and gave back to the diocese in donations for church purposes more than he received as the income of the see." * Lightfoot's generosity was notorious. It was nobly exhibited in the building, at his sole cost, of S. Ignatius, Sunderland, one of our few noteworthy modern churches. The new churches were generally small in accommodation, their provision being eked out by the erection of numerous mission buildings, the existence of which now adds difficulty to the due working of

* Vide *Dictionary of National Biography*.

the parishes. At that time there was no such shortage of clergy as that which embarrasses the Bishops to-day. Not the most far-seeing of ecclesiastical statesmen could have foreseen such a situation as that which now confronts the Church. Durham was wealthy, and remote. Its wealth attracted the unfit: its remoteness protected the idle. Nowhere in England were the abuses of the Church more grossly apparent than in Durham, and nowhere could they proceed with greater assurance of impunity. We are told that, in the time of Sir Robert Walpole, it was the custom in Downing Street to divide the bishopricks into two categories for purposes of administering the Crown patronage—bishopricks of ease, and bishopricks of business. Durham was accounted a bishoprick of ease, and as such it commanded in exceptional measure the interested concern of the titled, the wealthy, and the ambitious. From Cosin to Shute Barrington, with the single exception of the illustrious Author of the *Analogy*, all the bishops of Durham were men of family and influence, whose appointment to the Episcopate of Durham was easier to explain than to justify. What was true of the Palatine See was true also of its extensive patronage, and the parishes naturally reflected the features of the diocese. The wealthier livings were held in plurality by absentees, and almost everywhere

personal conduct and pastoral duty among the clergy had fallen to a lamentably low level. Upon this ill-organized and secularized Church fell suddenly the duty to provide for the spiritual needs of the great multitudes of manual workers which the industrial development of the county was bringing within its area.

Two clergymen came to Durham in the year 1752, the one, Richard Trevor, to take up his residence there as Bishop of the diocese, the other, John Wesley, to begin his work of evangelization among the people. They were contemporaries at Oxford, where Trevor had been elected a Fellow of All Souls in 1727, a year after Wesley had been elected to a Fellowship of Lincoln. Bishop Trevor is reported to have declared that, do what he could, he could not help becoming a wealthy man, because he could not get rid of the vast revenues of his See. It never seems to have occurred to him that he had a duty towards the pitmen and ship-workers who were pouring into the diocese, and creating by their toil those revenues, of which the amplitude was even embarrassing to the diocesan. The county historian expatiates on his amiable qualities and 'the singular dignity of his lordship's person.' "The episcopal robe," we are told, "was never worn more gracefully." He was as admirable in office as he was delightful in society. "He wore his temporal honours with dignity and ease.

Never were the shining qualities of the Palatine more justly tempered by the milder graces of the Diocesan.” * His successor must always remember with gratitude the munificent donor of the Italian and Spanish pictures which adorn Auckland Castle, but he notes with mournful wonder the absence from the lavish eulogy of the biographer of any indication that Bishop Trevor perceived the spiritual necessity of the people entrusted to his charge, or that he made any effort to raise the spiritual level of the diocese.

Wesley's Journal, from the year 1752 onwards, contains many references to his labours in the diocese of Durham. They record a truly apostolic ministry, untiring, unsparing, unceasing. It met with an eager response from the people. Methodism gained a hold on their affections which it has certainly not yet lost. “I love our brethren in the southern counties,” wrote Wesley in 1777, “but still I find few among them that have the spirit of our northern societies.” It has been maintained by the authors of the well-known volume, *The Town Labourer*, 1760–1832, that there was a special congruity between Methodism and the Miners which facilitated the success of the preachers :

* Vide *The History and Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham*, by William Hutchinson, F.A.S., vol. i. pp. 580 f. : Newcastle, 1785.

“ It is significant that this religion (Methodism) spread most quickly, and in its most extreme form, among the workers living in the deepest gloom, for the miners were particularly given to Methodism. Perhaps the very dangers of their employment prompted them to seek this special sense of protection, just as the belief in the miraculous salvation of religion is particularly strong among the deep-sea fishermen of Brittany. . . . For the miner or weaver, the Chapel with its summons to the emotions, its music and singing, took the place that theatres, picture galleries, operas, occupied in the lives of others.” *

But there is no need to attribute the success of the Methodist preachers to any other cause than that which ‘ leaps to the eyes ’ of the social student. Practically the Church did not exist : the preachers had the field to themselves. “ We were not dissenters,” said the late John Wilson, M.P. (“ the Old Pilot ”), himself an excellent example of a Methodist miner, “ there was nothing for us to dissent from.” The writers we have just quoted do themselves provide the explanation of the rapid triumph of Methodism :

“ At the beginning of the Industrial Revolution the Established Church hardly counted in the spiritual life of the districts where mines and factories began to collect these vast populations. In most of the places that were turned from rural solitudes into mining camps

* Vide Hammond, *The Town Labourer*, p. 272.

or textile towns, the Church scarcely existed for the poor except as the most unrelenting of the forces of law and order." *

Within the Bishoprick of Durham from time immemorial the Bishop had possessed civil as well as ecclesiastical authority. In one hand he held the pastoral staff, in the other he held the sword; and the latter attracted more attention than the former. It was not until 1836 that the Palatine dignity was finally severed from the See, and annexed 'as a separate regality' to the Crown. To the people of Durham the Bishop had less the aspect of a Father in God than that of a Chief Magistrate.

"The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." The Church at work in the parishes of Durham to-day takes little assistance or prestige from the past. The parish churches themselves are often more recent in date, and far less imposing in aspect, than the Methodist Chapels. While the one celebrate their 'Jubilees,' the other celebrate their 'centenaries.' The fabrics throughout the mine-field are commonly mean and even squalid, as wholly destitute of architectural merit as they must needs be void of historic interest. Their ignoble and uninviting aspect does not assist the

* Vide *l.c.*, p. 268.

labours of the clergy. The temporary nature of the mining industry, which continues in the locality only so long as the coal in the mine has not been exhausted and can be worked profitably, has doubtless provided an effective argument for a cheese-paring economy. Why should we 'sink capital' in churches which will only be needed for a few years? It is a question which seems to admit of but one answer; but that is an answer which condemns two or even three generations of the mining population to the depressing influence of mean and shabby buildings suggestive rather of a close-reckoning economy than of an all-welcoming Church. I do not wish to give the impression that the Church has failed in the mining parishes. On the contrary, I think that, when all the unfavourable circumstances under which it has laboured have been fairly weighed, the final verdict must needs be that its success has been considerable and surprising. There are mining parishes in which the parish church, in spite of its mean appearance, is a living centre of religious and social activity. Nothing could be falsier to the facts than the suggestion that there is any inherent incongruity between the Anglican version of Christianity and the miner's distinctive character. Rather is it the case that, wherever the Anglican version of Christianity as expressed in the Prayer Book is honestly presented to the

people in a laborious and devoted pastorate, they respond to it with remarkable alacrity. A type of churchmanship, simple, robust, self-sacrificing, and wonderfully loyal, has developed in some mining parishes, and—if only we had enough clergymen of the right sort to send to the people—would, I believe, within a few years prevail throughout the Durham coal-field. It is not, I think, denominational prejudice which leads me to think that the religious future of the people does not lie with Methodism. No one perceives more clearly, or acknowledges more heartily than I, the magnitude of the service which John Wesley and his followers rendered to the diocese of Durham in the past. Those brave and devoted evangelists saved the Christianity of the people in an evil time when the Church, half-paralyzed by its own abuses, and sunken in a slothful apathy, had left them in spiritual destitution. But the special circumstances which favoured the success of the early preachers have largely passed away. Methodism no longer plays so considerable a part in the popular life of Durham as it once did. Its distinctive religious discipline is now largely obsolete. Its social and educational functions have been mostly taken over by the State, and the great advance in knowledge and intelligence, which has resulted from national education and

the triumph of democracy, has not harmonized well with the crude dogmatism and cruder worship which gave strength to the earlier Methodism. Politics do often edge out religion.

On all forms of organized Christianity the changes of social habit and the anarchy of opinion which mark our time are bearing hardly; but Nonconformity as a whole seems to me even more helpless in the modern world than the Church of England, for, while the removal of civil disabilities and the development of democracy have gone far to destroy the historic justifications of Nonconformity, they have relieved the Church of England of many discreditable and spiritually incapacitating associations. Moreover the new interest in the past, and even the popular passion for pageants, tend to recommend to the younger generation of Nonconformists (who have no strong personal concern with the distinctive features of Dissent, and are becoming detached from its local connexions), that great Institution of the National Church, of which the monuments are ever more intelligently studied and more adequately appreciated. If only the Church of England were united and faithful to its own system, I should not think it extravagant to believe in the possibility of a great recovery of its hold on English love and obedience. In spite of recurrent economic strife and the sporadic

activities of the Communists, there is hardly any hostility to Christianity among the people, and a good clergyman can count everywhere upon a friendly welcome.

The parochial system in Durham, like every other element of the local life, suffers from a circumstance which may be connected with the former domination of the Church, viz. the noticeable absence of 'natural leaders.' To this is now increasingly added the absenteeism of the property-holding class, a process which threatens to make the county approximate in social type to the East End of London. It is the special misfortune of mining communities that they include no sufficient admixture of classes. Politics, local and general, tend to be narrow and 'class-conscious' to an extent hardly equalled in more normally constituted societies. The clergyman has few educated laymen with whom to associate, from whom he may fairly expect co-operation, and who will, by an undisputed natural right, take a leading part in parochial efforts. Thus he is without that stimulus and corrective which, perhaps more than anything else, assist clerical efficiency. Politics in Durham are unwholesomely one-sided, for "Labour" is established in a supremacy so apparently secure, that the normal conflict of parties is stripped of interest, and the public mind subsides into a lassitude

equally natural and depressing. All this tells necessarily, and tells badly, on the parochial life. In recent years the county of Durham has suffered terribly from the social unrest and economic dislocation which have been the aftermath of the War. Unemployment, continuing year after year, depresses and degrades its victims. Every serious effort to solve the problem aspires to disperse the involuntarily idle population, transferring some to other parts of the island, and sending some as emigrants far over the seas. The parish clergy, readily co-operating with the civil authorities, watch with mingled feelings the removal from their parishes of the very individuals who have been the mainstays of parochial effort. It is, indeed, difficult to overstate the discouragement, confusion, and even paralysis which have come to the parochial system from the untoward course of secular affairs. I note with sadness, but without surprise, that the number of confirmation candidates tends to fall.

While thus the secular framework of the Church's life is in Durham for divers reasons particularly unhelpful, the Church's system is perilously undermanned. The shortage of clergy, which has now reached a point at which the provision of incumbents for the benefices is becoming doubtful, tells with special severity on those dioceses, of which Durham is one, which

have hitherto employed many assistant curates. At the present time there are working in the parishes of England about 4000 fewer clergymen than were working in them before the War. In the single diocese of Durham there are about 150 fewer clergymen at work than were working there in July, 1914. It is apparent that so great a reduction makes the efficient working of the parochial system very difficult. Nor is it only in the number of the working clergy that the present shortage is shown, but also in their spiritual competence. For the clergy who are now being appointed to pastoral charge, often in great industrial parishes, have been in many cases so recently ordained that their inexperience is apparent. Youth has many priceless qualities—courage, enthusiasm, the genius of comradeship, a great capacity of self-sacrifice—and these effect much; but there are other qualities not less essential for pastoral efficiency, which apart from experience can hardly be gained—discrimination, patience, judgment, largeness of sympathy, spiritual insight. It was surely not without reason that the Apostle insisted on experience as an essential qualification for the bishop or presbyter—‘*not a novice, lest being puffed up he fall into the condemnation of the devil*’ (1 Timothy iii. 6). It cannot but be a grave matter that the full responsibilities of pastoral ministry should be

imposed on young and inexperienced clergymen. It was the union of an incumbent's experience and the enthusiasm of the younger men who formed his staff that in the past has given special value to training in a large and well-ordered parish. Staffs of clergy are now becoming few. The parochial incumbents of the future will for the most part have had no such grounding in pastoral method, and no such discipline by fellow-curates as once entered into the normal training of unbeneficed men.

Meanwhile the work of the Church everywhere, and especially in the industrial districts, suffers from the absence of young clergymen, for scarcely has the newly-ordained man reached the end of the customary two years probationary period before, if he be a man of parts, he may be offered a benefice outside the diocese. Such early preferment is bad for the parish where he is just becoming really useful : it is bad for the diocese, which loses his service, probably for ever : it is bad for the clergyman himself, who is called to responsibilities for which his inexperience disqualifies him. The average age of the English Clergy is now stated to be no less than 57 years. That must mean that many incumbents are far older. What reality of pastorate, so far as the majority of the parishioners, including most of the younger men and all the lads (who abound

in the diocese of Durham) are concerned, can there be, when the entire burden of a great industrial parish rests on an ageing and often also an ailing man, who can with difficulty achieve the legal minimum of parochial obligation?

In framing the questions to which, in my Second Quadrennial Visitation, I should request answers from the Clergy, I determined to have in mind the actual working of the parochial system in the diocese. I wished to discover how you were addressing yourselves to your duty, and attempting, in the extraordinary difficulties of your present situation, to fulfil your solemn obligation as parish priests.

II.

In the Appendix there will be found both the Visitation Inquiries which were sent to the Incumbents, and the summary of the answers returned, which has been prepared for me by my friend and neighbour the Rev. A. B. Parry-Evans, Vicar of Bishop Auckland and Rural Dean of Auckland, to whom for this, and many other valuable assistances, I am greatly indebted. Here I propose to make such observations and suggestions as appear to me to be desirable. I have to thank you for the care which you have evidently

bestowed on answering the questions which I addressed to you.

1. *Parochial Visitation.*

I must say candidly that I am not convinced that the general abandonment of house-to-house visitation is as unavoidable as the clergy seem to assume. It is for many men an unattractive part of ministerial duty, and for that very reason any plea for its neglect ought to be the more closely scrutinized. It is not sufficiently realized that in abandoning this part of their spiritual duty, with whatever excuses, the clergy are severing almost the only personal link which connects them with many, even with most, of their parishioners, and are in fact tacitly surrendering the conception of pastoral charge which is traditional in the Church of England, entrenched in the 'use and wont' of English society, and certainly assumed by the Ordinal. In the seventeenth century controversy raged on the point, whether a Christian Church should be organized on a territorial or on a personal basis. Where the parson leaves a large part of the people living within the area of his 'cure' unvisited, he does in fact repudiate the territorial basis presumed by the parochial system, and conceive of himself as the minister of a 'gathered' church, who has no personal obligation towards any save

the members of his own congregation. It may be the case that this changed conception of the English clergyman's duty is really unavoidable by reason of the excessive size of his parish, and the difficulty of obtaining assistant curates, but its gravity ought to be realized, and nothing short of genuine necessity allowed to provide its justification.

It is at least worth considering whether the prevailing practice of leaving house-to-house visitation (where it is attempted at all) to district visitors and magazine distributors, and limiting the parson's personal share in the work to the visiting of the sick and those (often a sadly small proportion of the parishioners) who are personally associated with the parish church, might not with advantage to religion be reversed, so that the more difficult, or at least less attractive, task of visiting the non-religious and irreligious should be undertaken by the parish priest himself.

As I read the returns of the Clergy, and correlate them with my own observations, I find it difficult to avoid the conclusion that, with a more intelligent and responsible allocation of the parson's time to his various tasks, and, perhaps, in some cases, with a rather more exacting sense of pastoral obligation, more might be done in this matter of 'house-to-house' visitation than is now often attempted. Allowing for the parson's

annual holiday, there are forty-eight weeks in the year, and if, on the average, only three afternoons in the week be devoted to the work of systematic visitation, there would be at least 140 days in the year available for the purpose. On the liberal estimate of twenty minutes for every visit, and making the reasonable assumption that the parson would not devote less than three hours to his afternoon's work, I find (if my calculation be correct) that he would visit at least 1260 houses in the course of the year ; and this would mean a population of not less than 6,300. In fact, it would mean much more, for the visiting parson would soon discover that many of his parishioners were Nonconformists and Roman Catholics, attached to their own churches, whom therefore he could properly regard as spiritually provided for. It does not seem to me excessive to suppose, that the parson who visited systematically from house-to-house three afternoons in the week throughout the year, would get into personal contact with the greater part of his parishioners even in one of our large Durham parishes. And, certainly, his frequent appearances in and out of the houses would assure the parishioners that their clergyman was actively engaged on his duty during the week, and not (as too many of them now imagine) a man with a ' soft job ' which held him to no more than Sunday work. I find

it difficult to believe that three afternoons in the week throughout the year will not provide sufficient time for visiting the sick, fulfilling the 'surplice duties,' and the like. The mornings, I assume, will be occupied by the Service in Church, teaching in the Church Schools (where such exist), reading, and preparation of sermons, etc. The parish clergyman's evenings can never be unoccupied in a well-organized urban parish.

I desire, therefore, that you should reflect, with a single-minded purpose of doing your duty honestly, on the gravity of neglecting or abandoning altogether the regular visitation of the parishioners from house to house, and I beg you not to acquiesce in such neglect or abandonment without a clear conviction that you ought so to do. Remember, there is no subtler temptation than that which makes us excuse the neglect of a relatively difficult or unpalatable duty by pleading zeal in the performance of another duty, easier and more agreeable. And there is yet another circumstance to be considered.

Church Schools are few in this diocese, and will become fewer. Where they exist, and the clergy enter them regularly both as managers and as religious teachers, the children form a link between the parents and the Church. But, where that link is lacking, as, alas ! is the case in most of our great Durham parishes, the visits

of the parson are the only means of contact remaining in the case of a great part of the people.

2. Preparation of Confirmation Candidates.

Of all the subjects dealt with in my Visitation, none has in my view greater importance than Confirmation. This subject also connects itself very evidently with parochial visitation, for how shall the parson know what children in his parish are old enough to be presented for confirmation if he never visits their homes? The Rubrick seems to take for granted that he has this knowledge :

“ And whensoever the Bishop shall give knowledge for Children to be brought unto him for their Confirmation, the Curate of every Parish shall either bring, or send in writing, with his hand subscribed thereunto, the names of all such persons within his Parish, as he shall think fit to be presented to the Bishop to be confirmed. And, if the Bishop approve of them, he shall confirm them in manner following.”

The LXIst Canon points clearly in the same direction :

“ Every Minister that hath Cure and charge of souls, for the better accomplishing of the Orders prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer concerning Confirmation, shall take such especial care as that none may be presented

to the Bishop for him to lay his hands upon, but such as can render an account of their faith according to the catechism in the said Book contained. And when the Bishop shall assign any time for the performance of that part of his duty, every such minister shall use his best endeavour to prepare and make able, and likewise to procure as many as he can to be then brought, and by the Bishop to be confirmed."

It is hard to see how any Minister can be said to "have used his best endeavour to procure as many as he can," when he has allowed himself to remain in ignorance as to the existence of suitable children within his parish.

The absence of religious teaching worthy the name in the day schools, and the difficulty of making the Sunday schools effective centres of religious teaching, add greatly to the importance of the preparation which candidates for Confirmation receive from the Clergy before they are presented to the Bishop. It is probably true that for the most part of English people the only time in their lives when they will have been taught systematically about the Christian religion, and their obligation as members of the Christian Church, will be the weeks before their Confirmation. Sermons, of which the hearing was indicated to the godparents as an important part of the baptized child's religious education, are now rarely in any effective sense didactic. For the

most part the English Churchman's equipment of religious knowledge is extremely meagre. In too many cases it is little more than a *mélange* of half-understood phrases picked up from popular preachers, and half-digested ideas borrowed from the newspapers. The queer medley of demoralized sectarianism, which runs riot in America, could hardly have existed if the American people had been 'grounded' in the principles of Christianity, and not left to pick up their religious notions from their environment.

The Church Catechism, an incomparable summary of the elements of Christian Faith and Duty, once formed the foundation of the Englishman's religion, and stamped on his character a strength and simplicity which have been widely recognized as nobly distinctive; but it is now unknown to the majority of English people, so generally unknown that it can be injuriously misquoted with little risk of discovery. This general ignorance of the Catechism must necessarily affect the use made of it in the instruction of the Candidates. It would probably be unwise to insist on a verbally accurate knowledge of the formulary, though its substance ought certainly to be understood. Indeed, I think that the Catechism ought to be the backbone of the teaching throughout, and its general plan cannot be bettered. Moreover, its presence in the

Prayer Book provides a summary to which the Churchman can ever recur. He will find it the more helpful if it bring back to his mind instructions, designed to elucidate it, which were themselves valuable and suggestive. Such use of the Catechism appears to be the general practice in the Diocese. In only two parishes is it stated that the Catechism is wholly laid aside, and I cannot think that the substitutes which the Incumbents have provided have a promising appearance. In the one case, the preparatory course is concerned with "Missions and Holy Communion," in the other it deals with "Regeneration, Repentance, Conversion, Acceptance, Self-surrender." I do not think these are improvements on the Church Catechism; nor can I see that the aspects of truth, which they must be supposed to emphasize, could not be effectively introduced as part of the supplementary instruction which the Church Catechism, employed in the manner indicated, requires.

The Catechism, which was composed in the sixteenth century, needs supplementing when it is used as a teaching formulary in the twentieth. In the circumstances of our modern world, it is neither fair nor prudent to leave the young altogether uninformed with respect to matters which bear on their religious habit, which

exercise men's consciences, and in which the lines of personal duty are not always easily discerned. Let me instance four—the Bible, the Lord's Day, Marriage, and the Church.

(i.) The Bible no longer stands where it once stood in the thought and habit of English Christians. Critical views have been so boldly proclaimed, and so widely diffused, that a considerable panic has been induced among the rank and file of the Churches. This panic has found expression in the bigoted literalism of the Fundamentalists. Popular attacks on Christianity (which were never more persistent and more violent) fasten on the crude science, undeveloped morality, incredible prodigies, and apparent contradictions of the Old Testament, and reduce to utter confusion the unlettered Churchman, who has been accustomed to take for granted that everything that he reads in the Bible is both literally true and divinely authoritative. We ought to make sure that our Communicants have grasped the conception of a gradual revelation, and can recognize degrees of spiritual value in the sacred writings. The Preparation, then, should certainly include at least one class on the Bible. I found it helpful, when as a parish clergyman I had to prepare boys and girls for Confirmation, to take the list of Books contained in the Bible for the subject of a class. I made the candidates

get them into their historical order, and made clear to them by a few salient examples what was meant by the spiritual progress of the Jews under the guidance of the prophets. You will find either Peake's *Commentary on the Bible*, or the *New Commentary* just published by S.P.C.K. very useful in preparing for such a class on the Bible as I have suggested.

(ii.) Hardly will the young Communicant have entered on his career as a fully responsible member of the Christian Church, before he will have to decide on the practical question, How shall he treat the Lord's Day? He will find little guidance from the authority of his Church. Christians speak with many voices, and their practice is as various as their opinion. The secularizing drift in modern society has swept away the old severity, and there seems no small likelihood that all religious observance of the Lord's Day will vanish from the world. The distinction between the habit of general society and the requirement of the Christian profession is nowhere more apparent than at this point, and yet it is nowhere more difficult to state with precision what that requirement actually is. To secularize the Sunday is to break the backbone of religious habit with most people, since it cuts them off from the fellowship and discipline which are the normal conditions of religious habit. Is the Com-

municant free to turn his back on the Lord's House in order to spend the Lord's Day in excursions? May he without sin exchange even-song for the cinema on Sunday evening? Can he without scandal play games on Sunday? The points which challenge determination are endless. All these secular employments are harmless in themselves: they belong quite plainly to the class of 'things indifferent.' Where shall the line of moral obligation be discerned, and on what principles shall it be traced? The Sabbatarianism of a past age is now everywhere condemned: but a religious treatment of the Lord's Day is coeval with the Christian religion, and can hardly now be separated from its serious profession. Something will be gained if we teach clearly what are the essential elements of rightful Sunday observance. Canon Glazebrook's suggested 'statement of principles' might well provide a basis for our teaching. It runs as follows:

"(1) Sunday is the day for Christians to join in worship. No man spends it well who does not habitually unite with his neighbours in praise and prayer.

"(2) Sunday is a day of recreation. Recreation means different things for different people, since an essential feature of it is change. The manual labourer will rest his body: the brain-worker will seek exercise: both alike will be the better for a visit to a picture-gallery, or a concert, or a talk with friends.

“(3) Sunday is the festival of family life. It is the only day on which most fathers can see much of their children. Unless some hours of the day are employed in cultivating family affection, its ties will be dangerously relaxed.

“(4) Sunday is the day for meditation. The average man, if he does not devote some part of Sunday to reading or thought about matters outside his daily occupations, becomes a slave to routine and no longer possesses his own soul.”

Sunday observance will only survive if it can be so justified to the reason and conscience of the individual Christian, that he can perceive in it an integral part of his religious duty. In the future authority and convention will play an ever smaller part in securing religious observance. They must be replaced by personal conviction. To create such personal conviction is the end to which our efforts in handling the subject, and especially in doing so with Confirmation candidates, should steadily be directed.

(iii.) The Confirmation candidate has in most cases reached that stage of his natural development in which the fact of sex-life, and the problems of self-discovery and self-discipline which it involves, have become apparent. In all cases the crisis of puberty has been reached, and Confirmation properly connects itself with the distinctive needs, spiritual and moral, of that great

natural crisis. Dr. Stanley Hall in his well-known work on the Psychology of Adolescence, gives a considerable place to the religious handling of puberty which marks the Jewish and Christian religions. These religions, he writes,

“have always recognized the critical nature of this epoch, and its peculiar temptations, and invoked the aid of transcendental motives before intelligence and self-control are able to cope with the strong new instincts that now spring into life. Hence a religious majority is celebrated in the early teens, when the young become members of the religious community as well as of the home, and parents seek divine and ecclesiastical co-operation in the further nurture of their offspring.” *

Marriage, in which sexual morality is summed up, is probably present in the minds of many, perhaps of most Confirmation candidates, for industrialism favours sexual precocity, and very early courtship is the tradition of society. The cinema, the cheap newspapers, and popular fiction force seduction and divorce on the notice even of boys and girls. Society on every plane is becoming familiar with the existence of divorced persons, and with the social and domestic complications which their presence ensures. General opinion on the subject of Marriage is chaotic. Social practice tends to become so. Modern

* Vide *Adolescence*, ii. 261.

Society is breaking away from the Christian tradition with respect to Marriage openly and defiantly. Even non-Christians, if they be informed and considering persons, must needs be dismayed by the disrepute into which the Marriage Union is falling throughout Western civilization, and most conspicuously in that powerful community between the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans which now dominates all civilized communities. In politics, in economic procedure, in social practice, in personal habit, America is 'calling the tune' ever more apparently. It is but too plain that the vast and waxing influence of America is being cast more and more decisively against the Christian conception of Marriage. In a recent issue of the *Hibbert Journal* an American discusses the Tests of a Nation's Civilization, and asks whether America can satisfy them. In the course of his article he writes,

"The American family, based like the family of every nation on the exclusive love of one man and one woman for each other, has as an institution passed away. Its foundation in marriage has lost the popular respect which it formerly commanded. The conjugal relation is entered upon without proper forethought, the contracting parties knowing that it can be easily dissolved. A new name, 'companionate marriage,' awakens only a sense of dismay, for its meaning, standing for a duration

of the conjugal union only so long as the contracting parties wish, is simply and only a recognition of the common conjugal practice. The obligations of the marriage bond are easily flung aside. Absolute divorce in certain States may be secured on trivial grounds, such as abandonment or non-support for a brief period, or even 'incompatibility.' Divorce, too, is often the result of collusion between the husband and the wife. The result is that in certain Commonwealths, or in certain counties of several Commonwealths, there is one divorce for every three marriages. The future of the United States interpreted in terms of the fundamental institution of the family is indeed dark." *

Judge Lindsey, whose books *The Revolt of Modern Youth* and *The Companionate Marriage* present a repulsive picture of post-war society in the United States, maintains that "in the last four or five years the marriage and divorce ratio, which in the cities was formerly in the ratio of about one divorce to four marriages, is now more nearly one divorce to two marriages." †

America is not England: but England tends to become like America; and the pace of the approximation grows ever faster. Dr. Schiller, writing in *The Eugenics Review* (January 29, 1929), presents a sufficiently alarming picture of our own situation:

* Vide *Hibbert Journal*, January, 1929. Article by Charles Franklin Thwing, President Emeritus of Western Reserve University, p. 343.

† Vide *The Revolt of Modern Youth*, p. 211.

“In large sections of modern society the family seems to be not so much breaking up as petering out. It is losing its inherent connexion with marriage, which is itself coming to be regarded merely as a temporary association for mutual amusement, as in decaying Rome. Now this is a very serious situation, for experience shows that the only really stable civilizations, the only ones which have endured without eclipse, have been based on the family.”

The practice of the modern world would appear to be accordant with its theory as this is expressed in its favourite literature. “When we turn to the chief novelists of the present day,” observes an acute and well-informed writer, “we find ourselves in a world in which the principle of the Christian life is almost entirely wanting. It is not merely in so-called moral questions that some writers are definitely opposed to Christian teaching, but that their whole outlook is entirely different from that of the true Christian.”

“We think it is a fact that if we take at hazard five new novels out of the library, we shall find that at least three will glorify illicit passion and leave us with the impression that the whole duty of man is to do what he likes and not what he ought.” *

In these circumstances, then, it can hardly be necessary to argue at length for the importance

* Vide *The Church Quarterly Review*, October, 1927. Article on “Modern Novels and Christian Morals,” by Canon Addleshaw, p. 97.

of making sure that, when the young Christian is being instructed on the privileges and responsibilities of his Church membership, he should be taught clearly the truth about so vital a matter as Marriage. I am not, of course, suggesting that he should be initiated into the difficult casuistry of sex-relationships, but that he should understand the broad lines of Christian duty. He ought at least to realize that there is in this matter a higher authority than that of the State which must mark out for him the limits of marital obligation, that Christ has confirmed monogamy by His supreme authority, that He has condemned divorce as inconsistent with the principle of the Marriage Union, that only in one cardinal instance has He allowed divorce at all, and that His Church exists to affirm and exemplify His revelation of truth.

It is really important that Christ's teaching about Marriage should be emphasized, for in current discussions it seems to be assumed, as if the point were too clear to need argument, that Christianity has no proper concern with Marriage. Thus the Marriage Law Reform League, of which the Chairman of Council is a clergyman, postulates that "we have inherited from a barbarous age a false conception of marriage, and in consequence have failed to realize in what the sanctity of marriage consists." It is the avowed object

of the League to assimilate the marriage law of England to that of 'nearly every civilized country.' We may not, indeed, deny that the development of civilization and the advance of science have raised some issues which were not present to the minds of those who framed the marriage law of Christendom; and to this extent we must needs admit, that we are now confronted by problems for the solution of which the wisdom of our ancestors cannot suffice. But these circumstances, while they cannot but affect the precise applications of Christian teaching on Marriage contained in the New Testament, which our laws ought to prescribe, cannot possibly justify to Christian minds such a frank repudiation of the Christian ideal as is grossly presented at the present time in Russia and America, nor authenticate such an attitude towards Marriage as seems to be assumed by the Marriage Law Reform League. Some words of Weizsäcker's description of the situation in which the Apostolic Church found itself, when first it was carried beyond the morally protected sphere of its ancestral Judaism into the wider world of pagan society, do not seem wholly inapplicable to the situation which is now developing within Christendom itself:

"In every sphere, in sexual and social life, in the cultus, and finally in the creed itself, the Church was threatened with destruction by the old dissolute morals,

the attractive geniality of the pleasures associated with the ancient rites, the mode of thought rooted in a thoroughly sensuous life, and the overweening confidence of their dialectic.” *

We might surely teach our young Communicants the simple outline of the Christian Ideal of Marriage, as it is with large authority set forth in the 67th Resolution of the last Lambeth Conference :

“The Conference affirms as our Lord’s principle and standard of marriage a life-long and indissoluble union, for better for worse, of one man with one woman, to the exclusion of all others on either side, and calls on all Christian people to maintain and bear witness to this standard.

“Nevertheless, the Conference admits the right of a national or regional Church within our Communion to deal with cases which fall within the exception mentioned in the record of our Lord’s words in St. Matthew’s Gospel, under provisions which such Church may lay down.

“The Conference, while fully recognizing the extreme difficulty of governments in framing marriage laws for citizens many of whom do not accept the Christian standard, expresses its firm belief that in every country the Church should be free to bear witness to that standard through its powers of administration and discipline exercised in relation to its own members.”

You will not misunderstand me. I am not

* Vide *The Apostolic Age*, i. 340.

here concerned with sex-instruction in schools, a subject of momentous importance, on which I think many are inclined to be unwisely confident. Neither clergymen nor schoolmasters *as such* appear to me properly designated as the teachers of the young in such matters. Only two persons, the parent and the doctor, can normally be qualified without danger to deal directly and in detail with sexual morality as it presents itself to the growing boy and girl. Others must approach the subject (if, indeed, they approach it at all) with great caution, a careful reticence, and a profound reverence for the innocence of childhood. All I am here pressing on you is that the instructed Christian (for such the Communicant ought to be) should realize the severity and authority of the Christian law of marriage.

(iv.) I think we ought to make as sure as we can that our Communicants have a clear understanding of the true significance of their membership of the visible Church of Christ. The ignorance of English Churchmen on this point is certainly a great scandal and a great danger. No doubt the parish clergyman dreads, and dreads rightly, the admission into his teaching of the candidates whom he is preparing for Confirmation, of any element which could be called controversial. It is difficult to speak about the visible Church without crossing the frontier of

the Debatable Land between the Church of England and the 'Free Churches' on the one hand, and between the Church of England and the Church of Rome, on the other. We did not create the difficulty: we are not responsible for it: we cannot allow it to determine our present duty. If it be indeed the case—and I must needs think that it is—that the breach between modern civilization and the Christian tradition of morals is widening, so that we are moving quickly towards a situation with respect to morality, and notably the morality of sex-relations, not essentially different from that which the Apostolic Church held in the Græco-Roman World, then it must be a matter of cardinal importance that our Communicants should realize the obligations which rest on them as members of the Christian Church, and should be prepared (so far as possible) for the difficult position into which their Christian profession will surely bring them. It can never be easy for an individual to stand out against the current opinion of his time and place: to do so may easily become extremely difficult and even painful. Yet nothing less was the duty of Christ's disciples in the ancient world: I see many reasons for thinking that it may become the duty of Christ's disciples in the modern.

It needs not that I should dwell on the extent and value of the work which is willingly done by

the laity of both sexes. Without that voluntary assistance it would be impossible to carry on the ministrations of religion in the diocese. Necessity, which the grave and continuing shortage of clergy has created, has compelled the extension of lay-work into the parish clergyman's sphere, and much now proceeds within the parish churches which only necessity can justify. This circumstance provides an opportunity to indolence and even to cupidity. I beg you to be very careful that no shadow of justification shall be given to the humiliating suggestion (which, however, has not been wholly inaudible) that the admirable zeal of our voluntary lay-helpers has been utilized on occasions when the plea of necessity cannot be honestly advanced. "Take thought for things honourable in the sight of all men" is an apostolic counsel which the parish clergyman may never safely forget. Here I propose to say something about a matter which hardly comes within the definition of lay-work, and yet may well be considered by religious lay-folk as a possible sphere of spiritual service, I mean, the provision of sponsors at the baptism of infants.

The administration of baptism in our great industrial parishes must be admitted to present an unattractive, unedifying, and extraordinarily perplexing appearance. As long ago as 1896 I preached a sermon on the subject before the

University of Oxford. My experience as Vicar of Barking (1888-1895) had compelled me to give much attention to the subject, which indeed troubled my conscience not a little; and I was glad, therefore, of the opportunity of bringing it before a wider public than that of my own parish. I do not suppose that the facts are very different now. In the course of that sermon I spoke as follows :

“The sponsor-system has wholly broken down. I have been at some pains to ascertain the facts. For one great parish with a population of 15,000 souls, in which the average number of baptisms was about 500, I can speak with the authority of personal responsibility. The majority of infants were really without sponsors, for the mother or friend who brought them to the font had no idea, not even the faintest, of spiritual responsibility as attaching to the act. ‘If the rule about god-parents were enforced in this parish,’ writes the vicar of a great dock parish, where more than 1000 infants are baptized every year, ‘the greater number of children would have to remain unbaptized.’ ‘The rule about sponsors,’ observes the vicar of a large East End parish, ‘is wholly broken down.’ He adds the following observations, which I make no apology for quoting : ‘The effect of enforcing the rule in all cases would *med sententiâ* stop all baptisms at any church where the rule was so enforced, or possibly cause a reversion to the old custom hereabouts of securing attendance of sponsors by standing “a pot,” which came to be the recognized value of a sponsor.’ ‘The chief effect of insisting on the rule in all cases, I feel,’ writes a

very well-known priest, whose opinion carries great weight, 'would be that many children would die unbaptized.' 'The rule about sponsors,' writes another, 'is *fully* observed in about 20 per cent. 'There is always one sponsor, but sometimes only the mother.' He calculates that the enforcement of the rubrick would reduce by 75 per cent. the number of baptisms, and he adds this observation, 'I do not believe in a stringent rule for such parts as this. It would lead to paid sponsors, as in old days, or to the neglect of baptism.' I will add but one more expression of opinion; it is from a well-known and highly respected East End clergyman. 'If the rule were enforced in all cases it would cause a great grievance, as there is a strong feeling in favour of having the children baptized, and the monthly nurses seem to have it on their conscience to bring the mother and child before the month is up, and if the baptism is refused because there was no godfather or insufficient number of godparents, it would cause a great scandal; on the other hand, if the male parent were enforced to attend in order that the child might be baptized, it would cause still greater scandal in the fact of an utterly irreligious being compelled to go through the form of sponsorship in order to obtain the baptism of his child. This, of course, would be aggravated were two male sponsors pressed for.' The initial security of sponsors having been dispensed with, it is no matter for surprise that the careful instruction of the children, which sponsors were intended to ensure, has in very many cases shared the same fate. The common assumption, that in a Christian country, equipped with large and detailed machinery of spiritual provision, there is a general probability, reaching even to practical certainty, that all children will come under Christian training,

cannot be rightly made. I desire to make very clear to you that in a large proportion of cases the baptized children were suffered to grow up without Christian instruction. Two facts may sufficiently authenticate this statement: the remarkably small proportion of the baptized who are presented for Confirmation, and the failure of the religious bodies to get the poorer children into Sunday schools. I estimate that about one-fourth of the baptized, who reach the age of Confirmation, are actually confirmed. . . . But Sunday schools are, as far as religious education is concerned, of little real worth. There is little teaching and no discipline; the teachers know neither what to teach, nor how to teach; a precarious and intermittent attendance is secured by periodical bribes to the children. If any think that the Sunday schools can take over from the elementary schools the task of teaching religion to the poor and rough children, he is labouring under a delusion which a slight acquaintance with the facts of urban life would speedily dispel.* The home, the day school, and the Church are the three agencies by which the baptized child must be taught the grace and the duty of that Christian membership conferred upon him (though often in such strange fashion) by the sacrament of Holy Baptism. But the home is commonly in no sense Christian; it is a breach of the law of England in most urban schools to teach a

* Within recent years great and successful efforts have been made to improve both the discipline and the instruction, so that many of the Sunday schools are now very valuable substitutes for the day schools in the matter of religious teaching. Still it remains unhappily true of most Sunday schools that their didactic value is very small, and their disciplinary standard very low.

baptized child the doctrines of his religion ; the Church, overweighted with duties, is wholly unable to supply the defects of home and school. Baptism in infancy in very many cases represents the entire contact with Christianity which our people receive, until with characters hardened into fixed types, with habits formed and dispositions developed, they pass out of school into the great life of the nation."

So the situation appeared thirty years ago. Is it different now? We may, perhaps, find the answer in the chapter on 'organized religion,' included in the valuable review of 'Industrial Tyneside' recently published by Dr. Mess, from which I extract the following :

"There are several points at which the numerical strength of the Church of England can be measured, though the numbers give little indication of the quality of adherence. In 1925 there were 13,789 babies baptized by Church of England clergy, rather more than 70 per cent. of all babies born on Tyneside. How little this means is apparent from the figures for later ages, and it is notorious that many parents who show no other interest in religion think it highly desirable that their babies should be baptized. And it is certain that some of the babies baptized by Church of England clergy are also baptized by ministers of other denominations. In the same year there were 36,363 Sunday school scholars, rather less than 20 per cent. of all children between the ages of 4 and 14. There were 3,519 confirmations, and, if that was a typical year, this would mean that about 20 per cent. of all adolescents present themselves for

confirmation. Boys and girls were roughly in the proportion of 40 to 60, a proportion which appears to be usual in most parts of the country.” *

Thanks to the large Irish population, Roman Catholics are numerous on the banks of the Tyne, but otherwise the conditions do not differ in any marked degree from those which obtain in other industrial districts. It is interesting to note that, according to the *Official Year Book*, the proportion of baptisms to population was considerably higher in Durham than in London.†

In 1896 I was more favourable to ‘strong’ action in dealing with a situation which approaches very nearly to a public scandal, and which may easily pass into actual profanation of the Sacrament, than I am now. Then I was prepared to ‘face the necessity of greatly reducing the number of the baptized.’ Now I am more disposed to make the most of any link which holds the people to Christianity. We are the ordained representatives of Him, who would not ‘break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax.’ A long history of pastoral neglect lies behind the spiritual deadness of the people, and we must ourselves

* Vide p. 131.

† These figures are : London with a population of 3,847,546 had 46,435 baptisms. Durham with a population of 1,479,206 had 20,775. Manchester with a population of 2,267,755 had no more than 23,999 baptisms.

accept the principal share of the disgrace. After all, in bringing their babes to baptism, these poor women are showing a certain deference to religion, and they are creating for the clergy avenues of approach which may be used with great spiritual advantage. I think much might be done through the Mothers' Union and the Guilds of Communicants to clothe sponsorship with reality. For the guidance of your own practice I think you may fairly take the rubrick as it stands in the Revised Prayer Book. There you have the recent and deliberate judgment of the Church of England with respect to Sponsors :

“ And note, that there shall be for every male-child to be baptized two Godfathers and one Godmother ; and for every female, one Godfather and two Godmothers. Nevertheless, when three sponsors cannot conveniently be had, one Godfather and one Godmother shall suffice. Parents, if need so require, may be sponsors for their own child, provided that the child have one other sponsor. No person shall be admitted to be a sponsor who hath not been baptized.”

CONCLUSION

Two years ago I sent to you the volume *Church and Parson in England*, in which I dealt at some length with various aspects of pastoral ministry. I will not repeat here what I have said

there. If I may judge from your answers to my question about the character of your preaching, some of you would appear to be better satisfied with your present procedure than I think can be altogether reasonable. Indeed, I incline to suspect that in a few cases the meaning of 'systematic instruction in Christian faith and morals' was hardly appreciated, nor, perhaps, the mental exertion and anxious thought involved in such "courses of exposition" as I had in mind, adequately realized. Let it suffice that I should affirm my belief, that the contempt, into which parochial preaching throughout England has generally fallen, could hardly co-exist with such a careful and conscientious fulfilment of "the Ministry of the Word," as your answers to my Visitation Inquiry might lead me to think prevails in my diocese. Continuity of teaching is too often disturbed by the invasion of "special" sermons directed rather to the collection which will follow the preaching, than to the edifying of the hearers who listen to it. Given such discourses as interest and help the people, the collections will not suffer by the preacher's concern with his evident duty. When papers are distributed in the pews, it cannot really be requisite that their contents should be rehearsed from the pulpit : nor, when notices are set on the church doors, should it be also necessary to interrupt the

order of Divine Service by a lengthened series of mixed announcements and exhortations. When the people gather for worship on the Lord's Day, they are entitled to receive from the "Lord's Messenger" something more than a medley of extracts from Societies' Reports, or a list of parochial arrangements including such details as the price of tickets and the assurance of "tea and refreshments." I do not underrate the spiritual value of social intercourse, nor the practice in comradeship which the organization of parochial efforts and entertainments may provide; but the vulgarizing influences are very strong, and life everywhere proceeds on a lamentably low level. I believe that one lever for lifting our normal habit is the steady upholding in the Service of the Lord's House of a high standard of reverence and devotion.

But to conclude. You have to fulfil your high ministry in circumstances which are difficult, novel, and deeply discouraging. Much of the difficulty is general to the Church, and much is special to the Diocese of Durham. The shifting of the population, rendered necessary by the partial collapse of our local industries, tends to destroy that continuity of social conditions, which is almost essential to efficient pastoral work. "I began my Confirmation class with about fifty lads," said one incumbent sadly, "I ended it with

less than thirty. The rest had moved away from the parish in the interval." Another, who with admirable public spirit had exerted himself to advocate emigration, had to lament the disappearance of all the younger men from his choir in obedience to his counsel. And so, in varying degree, it is in many Durham parishes. Parochial work is weakened and disorganized by the movement of the unemployed workers which on many grounds is so greatly to be desired. The presupposition of effective parochial pastorate is stability of the population. Take that away, and parochial pastorate has lost much of its opportunity and most of its happiness. I sympathize deeply with you in the long trial through which you have passed, and are still passing. Remember for your comfort that the peculiar difficulties which now shadow your life and embarrass your pastoral labour, are not of your own creation; that you are required to do your duty where and when it faces you; that your failure or success may be measured in other scales than those which you or your critics can employ; that "He that judgeth you is the Lord."

We cannot know the results of our work. It is the vain habit of popular life to imagine the contrary. Newspapers of every type and quality abound, and the personal element in them grows ever more prominent. Men are for ever judging,

flattering, denouncing one another. The flattery is worse than the denunciation, for while the last can rarely hurt a good man, the first may do so. I sometimes think that a besetting sin of democracy is its habit of superlative compliment. Never a clergyman leaves a parish, nor a prominent townsman dies, than the floodgates of conventional eulogy are opened. Parochial work proceeds in an atmosphere of mutual praise: parish magazines are full of it. Religious life is not helped by this popular habit of lavish and indiscriminating compliment. We must be on our guard against attaching any kind of importance to such vainly flattering estimates of us and our doings. Let us keep ever in mind those grimly simple words of Bishop Butler, which pierce through the accumulated unrealities of conventional speech like a sharp sword, "Things and actions are what they are, and the consequences of them will be what they will be: why then should we desire to be deceived?"

APPENDICES

- I. ESTABLISHMENT AND REUNION BY THE LORD BISHOP OF
LIVERPOOL—A REPLY.
- II. VISITATION INQUIRIES, 1928.
- III. SUMMARY OF RETURNS.

APPENDIX I

ESTABLISHMENT AND REUNION, BY THE LORD BISHOP OF LIVERPOOL—A REPLY

IN an article headed 'Disestablishment by Consent' which appeared in the *Nineteenth Century and After* (January, 1929), I urged the wisdom of removing the issue of Disestablishment from the arena of political warfare, and settling it by friendly agreement; and I offered reasons for thinking that the present juncture offered signal advantages for the making of such an attempt. Dr. David, the Bishop of Liverpool, writing in *The Liverpool Review* (February, 1929), credits me with 'calling for disestablishment from within,' which is hardly the same thing as 'disestablishment by consent,' and may mean something quite different. He expresses his dissent from my position, and offers reasons for clinging to the Establishment in spite of recent events. I propose to examine briefly his Lordship's argument.

He begins by taking exception to my general attitude. "*Especially*," he says, "*would I deprecate the appeal which he seems to make to the self-respect of the Church. I do not think that any Christian society has ever gained strength for its real work, or ever can, by fighting for recognition*"

on that ground." I am not sure that I understand the nature of the Bishop's objection, and I half suspect that we may be using words in different senses. Had I said 'self-interest,' or 'prestige,' or 'privilege,' or 'political power,' I could agree that all of these were false grounds for determining the action of a spiritual society; but 'self-respect' stands on a different footing altogether. What does a man's self-respect mean but a just sense of what is due to him as a man, to forfeit which would immerse him in conscious dishonour? When the word is applied to a Church, can it properly mean anything less than something pertaining to the Church's very essence, to compromise or surrender which would be self-stultifying? Spiritual liberty is essential to a Church which realizes its character as 'the Body of Christ'; and to appeal to the Church's 'self-respect' is all one with asserting that the matter with respect to which the appeal is made pertains to the very life of the Church as a spiritual society. Why is 'Erastianism' justly, and, I think, universally, held to be a deadly error? Is it not precisely because it violates the self-respect of the spiritual society, which it degrades into the servant and instrument of the State? The Church is ordained by its Divine Founder to be the 'salt' and 'light' of the world. Any treatment of it by the State which is inconsistent with these characters wounds its self-respect, perverts its purpose, and endangers its life. In my view, then, the appeal to the Church's self-respect disallows all lower considerations, earth-born and earth-

bound, which have too often in the past induced an unworthy complaisance, and paralyzed the Church's influence in the sphere of the conscience. Establishment may but too easily become inconsistent with the Church's self-respect, and, if I read ecclesiastical history rightly, has often been so. The issue which confronts us now is indeed dolorously familiar to the historian of Religion.

"If," proceeds the Bishop, "*the Church of England should at any time decide to sever the peculiar connexion with the State involved in its established position, it would become what is commonly called a sect, standing among and on equal terms with other sects.*"

It is, perhaps, worth pointing out that Disestablishment, like Establishment, must be the act, not of the Church, but of the State. The Church cannot disestablish itself. It can but protest against, and refuse to accept, conditions of Establishment which are either in themselves sinful, or in their effect disabling; and then take the consequences. If the Bishops had been (as the more ignorant of their assailants did not scruple to affirm) State officials, it would have been their obvious duty to resign office when the Prayer Book Measure was rejected by the House of Commons. But, inasmuch as (to use the language of the XXVIth Article) they exercise their ministry not 'in their own name but in Christ's, and do minister by his Commission and Authority,' they cannot resign to any secular authority, but must be (if the State desire their removal from office) by legal action ejected. The

only remedy which the State possesses against a Church which repudiates the conditions of Establishment is Disestablishment. Not to disestablish is to condone, that is, tacitly to revise the Establishment in accordance with the Church's desire.

The Bishop describes what he conceives to be the ill-consequences of this equality among fellow-sects to which, he thinks, Disestablishment would bring the Church of England; and incidentally he explains what he understands by a 'sect.' "*I take it that by the word 'sect' (I use it in no derogatory sense) is to be understood a body of people who were brought together by their belief that some particular aspect of Christian truth was being neglected or denied. And they are kept together by insistence upon that aspect, sometimes long after the neglect or denial has for practical purposes lost its significance, or has been repaired. But the memory of the original separation persists. And it induces a habit of mind which excludes. A sect tends to build and maintain a wall of partition around itself.*"

This may pass as a fair description of the Nonconformist bodies. Independents, Baptists, Quakers, Unitarians, Methodists might not untruly be said to stand for particular elements of truth, which, at the time of their original separation, were obscured; and which they have been led to emphasize unduly. But how can it be true of the Disestablished Church of England? If confessedly it does not apply to the Established Church, why should it apply to the Disestablished?

What 'particular aspect of Christian truth' is so bound up with Establishment, that Disestablishment would involve its abandonment? The doctrinal standards—creeds and articles—would remain unaltered: the Prayer Book would still be the Directory of worship: the government would still be vested in the Bishops. Why, then, should Disestablishment have this strange power of transforming a Church into a 'sect'? We may admit that the temper of an Establishment is inclusive, and that 'sects' tend naturally to be exclusive. It is the obvious interest of the State that the citizens should be as united as possible. In the past, when religion was the dominant interest of civilized man, it was the object of statesmen to make the limits of the National Church as wide as possible in order to include the largest possible number of the citizens within its membership. The generous latitude of the Anglican System, so far as it exists, has survived the uniformity which it was designed to make possible. Establishment has long ceased to imply national acceptance. The Church of England, as it has become under the democratic principle of religious equality, has become quite as denominationally distinctive as any of the "Free" Churches. Disestablishment could not affect in the smallest degree the doctrinal and disciplinary reasons why Nonconformists refuse its membership. Episcopacy would be just as offensive to the Independent: and infant baptism to the Baptist: and Sacraments to the Quaker: and the Catholic Creeds to the Unitarian. If all these are less

resented now than in the past, the explanation lies in the general decline of theological and ecclesiastical interests, the triumph of civic equality, the dominance of secular considerations in the sphere of national policy, and a growing consciousness in the Christian mind itself of the new peril which menaces religion in the modern world. If Disestablishment had any effect at all on Reunion, it would be natural to suppose that the effect would be favourable, for it would remove a political grievance which has been felt strongly in the past, and is by no means even now acquiesced in willingly.

The Bishop appeals to history in proof of the ill effects of sectarianism, but he uses a language which applies rather to the Church Universal than to the Sects; and I find it difficult either to identify the historical premisses of his argument, or to accept his account of the Reformation. That the Church of England has perpetuated something of the largeness of the Medieval Church may be conceded, but that this fact derives from its establishment may be sufficiently disproved by the fact that many other Reformed Churches were established without that consequence. It is, he holds, the Establishment that makes possible that variety of doctrine and practice within the Church of England which has now almost reached the point of an unchecked individualism. Surely it would be nearer the truth to ascribe this domestic anarchy to the paralysis of Establishment. It is because, in the existing circumstances, no discipline can be

enforced at all, that every variety of undiscipline runs riot within the Church. Can it be seriously maintained that this state of internal confusion is desirable in itself, that it reflects credit on religion, or ministers to any moral interest, or strengthens the State, or carries any promise of permanence? Finally, the Bishop reaches his practical proposals :

“ Because it is established that Church (the Church of England) has been able on the one hand to hold together varying expressions of faith in worship (this is one of the marks of a ‘ Catholic ’ Church) and on the other hand to maintain many kinds of touch with the world outside. Might we not look for progress in at least these two directions by an extension of the Establishment itself? Suppose that some of the Free Churches were willing for the sake of unity to share with us the responsibilities, duties, and privileges of our present position. Would this limit or hamper the freedom for which they stand? That would depend on the new relations between Church and State which are impending in any case. We too need more freedom, but not for ourselves alone. Might not our demand be more reasonably made, more wisely shaped, and more securely given if it came from a wider circle than our own? ”

“ I do not see why the Establishment should not be modified so as to be safe not only for the Church of England, but for other Churches too. The result might be a Church not less Catholic, and more truly National, because it would then cover a wider range of the Nation’s religious life. Such a Church would be at once more responsive to the best influences

moving in the world around it, and stronger against the worst. For that hope alone I would hold to the Establishment, even if to be rid of it in its present form would bring immediate advantage to the Church I serve."

What does the Bishop precisely mean? His language is so curiously inexact that his meaning is not easily perceived. What is the sense which he attaches to the word 'Catholic' when he offers the existing confusion within the Church of England—a confusion which has long provoked the derision of her foes, and the indignation of her best members—as an evidence of Catholicity? Is it, indeed, a reasonable proposition that the discordant forms of Divine service which the paralysis of discipline in the Established Church suffers to proceed within the parish churches,—forms so discordant that they express, and are designed to express, contradictory beliefs reflecting the whole range of dogmatic variation from Geneva to Rome, and all masked demurely under the Act of Uniformity!—ought to be interpreted as demonstrating that the Church of England is verily "a 'Catholic' Church"? Are not discipline, and agreement in belief, and obedience to Bishops, the first essentials of Catholicism? And does not the Church of England, as it exists to-day, and as it has been declared to exist in the Report of the Royal Commission on Ecclesiastical Discipline, exhibit rather the extravagances of an unchastened individualism than the generous range of Catholic devotion?

What, again, are we to understand by the

‘many kinds of touch with the world outside’ which ‘because it is established’ the Church of England is ‘able to maintain’? No doubt, when non-Anglicans were excluded from the universities, and the teaching profession from top to bottom was an Anglican monopoly, the Dissenting Minister had the aspect of an uncouth and unlettered enthusiast. The description was never wholly just, but at least it did not lack a certain plausibility. But now? In the ‘good old times,’ when Squire and Parson reigned in the villages, and (to quote Burke’s famous phrase) the Church ‘reared its mitred front in courts and parliaments,’ it did not seem excessive to claim for the Establishment that it linked the Church with the ‘higher levels’ of national life. But now? Are non-Anglicans less cultured, less prominent in literature and science, less in touch with the ‘great world,’ than Churchmen? Frankly, I do not see what it is that the Bishop desires his readers to understand. The Bishop suggests that ‘at least in these two directions’ (*i.e.* the ‘Catholic’ variety and the ‘many kinds of touch with the world outside’) we may ‘look for progress by an extension of the Establishment itself.’ What precisely does he mean by extending the Establishment to ‘some of the Free Churches,’ so that they could ‘share with us the responsibilities, duties, and privileges of our present position’? Does he suggest a delimitation of spheres such as obtains in some parts of the Mission Field, allocating some districts to one denomination and some to another, and dis-

tributing the parish churches and endowments accordingly? And does he suppose that such an arrangement would assist the cause of Reunion? Establishment only increases the Church's responsibilities by increasing its opportunities, and such increase is only made possible by the endowments. The Church's 'duties' may be fulfilled, or neglected; they cannot be 'shared.' What are the 'privileges' which Establishment confers? The presence of the Bishops in the House of Lords is the only privilege which, apart from the tenure of the ancient endowments, suggests itself. There is nothing to hinder the creation of Nonconformist 'spiritual peers' if the Nation so decides. The matter is trivial anyway. Apart from a transference of property from the clergy to the Nonconformist ministers, there is no 'sharing' possible. Moreover, sharing the endowments means concurrent endowment instead of disendowment, and both are concomitants of Disestablishment. How any such process of 'sharing' could advance the cause of Reunion I am totally unable to understand. The policy of 'robbing Peter to pay Paul' has never been advocated as a method of creating affectionate relations between the two apostles!

The Enabling Act destroyed for ever the possibility of extending the Establishment. Dr. David himself is credited with the authorship of the famous slogan, 'Life and Liberty,' by which English Churchmen, in the hectic days after the War, were induced to embark on the crusade for autonomy. There is no going back on that road

now. But Disestablishment, which cannot long be postponed, will not mean, as timorous Churchmen too often imagine, a breach between Christianity and the English nation. In truth, Disestablishment has become a misleading term, for the 'Free Churches' are, in the propriety of language, also established. Disestablishment really means the substitution of one kind of establishment for another, the addition of the Church of England to the number of Established Free Churches.

APPENDIX II.

No.

VISITATION INQUIRIES, 1928

* Please leave
this blank.

4th September, 1928.

MY REVEREND BROTHER,

I have thought it wise to direct the inquiries of my second visitation to the actual methods by which the "Cure of Souls" is effected in the parishes. You will observe that I have omitted many of the formal obligations which the Law imposes on the parish clergyman, and also those intimate personal ministries which, though of the highest spiritual importance, must needs lie outside the Bishop's direct concern. I have limited myself to the pastor's accustomed and normally indispensable activities. It is in the conscientious fulfilment of his normal functions, in dependence always on the help of God, that spiritual efficiency must be secured. The circumstances in which the work of the Ministry has to be carried on in modern England have become extremely difficult. There seems reason for thinking that the most approved pastoral methods are failing to match the new social conditions. By answering frankly and carefully the visitation questions you will certainly assist me greatly to form a just estimate of the situation

in our Diocese, and I think you will yourself be helped to a deeper realization of the magnitude and dignity of our sacred work.

Your faithful Friend and Servant,

HERBERT DUNELM.

I. PAROCHIAL VISITATION.

How far are you able to visit your parishioners from house to house? State what is your method of securing the regular visitation of the people.

2. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

i. Are there Church Schools in your parish? If so, what part, if any, do you personally take in the religious instruction?

ii. What provision do you make for training the teachers in the Sunday School of your parish?

iii. What organizations are there in your parish for the teaching, devotional help, and recreation of
(a) men, (b) women,
(c) boys, (d) girls?

3. CONFIRMATION.

i. By what means do you endeavour to bring the duty and privilege of Confirmation before every boy and girl of suitable age in your parish?

ii. State what is (*a*) the duration, (*b*) the range of the preparation, which you give to candidates for Confirmation.

iii. Do you keep a register of all who are confirmed from your parish? If so, have you been able to form an estimate of the proportion of them which become regular communicants?

iv. What manual for Holy Communion, if any, do you give to those who have been confirmed?

4. LAY-WORKERS.

i. What services are rendered in your parish by Lay-readers?

(*a*) In the Parish Church.

(b) In Mission Churches.

(c) In Bible Classes.

(d) In Parochial Visitation.

(e) In Temperance Work.

ii. Are licensed lay-workers employed in your parish? If so, what duties are assigned to them?

iii. How far are the Members of the Mothers' Union associated with the Preventive and Rescue Work of the Diocese?

iv. What is done in your parish to make sure that sponsors presenting infants for Baptism are duly qualified and responsible persons?

5. PREACHING.

i. How often has the normal order of the ecclesiastical year been interrupted by "Special Sundays"? Name these Sundays and state if the preachers came from without the parish.

ii. How far do you use the pulpit for systematic instruction in Christian faith and morals? Have you given courses of exposition of any part of the Bible, or of the Prayer Book?

iii. Have you made any special effort, *e.g.*, a Parochial Mission, to reach the lapsed and the indifferent? If so, what in your judgment has been the result?

iv. How far are your parishioners affected by:

(a) Christian Scientists and Faith-healing sectaries.

(b) Spiritualists.

(c) Secularist Sunday Schools and Lecturers.

6. GENERAL CONDITIONS OF MINISTRY.

i. How is the spiritual life of your parish affected by new factors, *e.g.*,

-
- (a) Unemployment.
 - (b) Political agitation.
 - (c) Secularisation of Sunday.
 - (d) Increased facilities of movement.
 - (e) Cinemas and dancing.
 - (f) Men's Clubs and Women's Institutes.
 - (g) Broadcasting.

ii. To what extent have you found it practicable and edifying to unite with Nonconformist Ministers in religious work within your parish ?

Signed

Rector

Vicar of.....

Curate-in-Charge

Date

APPENDIX III.

SUMMARY OF RETURNS.

Visitation Forms.—The following are the figures in connection with the number of Visitation Forms issued and returned :—

Name of Arch-deaconry.	Name of Rural Deanery.	No. of forms issued.	No. of forms returned.	No. not re-turned.
Durham	Chester-le-Street	19	18	1
	Durham	17	16	1
	Easington	22	22	—
	Gateshead	20	20	—
	Houghton-le-Spring	17	16	1
	Jarrow	22	22	—
	Lanchester	16	16	—
Auckland	Wearmouth	32	32	—
	Auckland	22	21	1
	Barnard Castle	10	10	—
	Darlington	20	19	1
	Hartlepool	19	19	—
	Stanhope	16	15	1
	Stockton	23	23	—
	Total	275	269	6

Of the number not returned, the following are the names of parishes, and reasons for non-return :—

Rural Deanery.	Parish.	Reason for non-return.
Chester-le-Street	Burnopfield	Vacant
Durham	Shincliffe	"
Houghton-le-Spring	Herrington	"
Auckland	Etherley	"
Darlington	Sockburn	"
Stanhope	Stanley	"

i.

PAROCHIAL VISITATION.

House to House Visitation.—In the small country parishes, where this is possible, house to house visitation seems to be regularly carried out, the house to house visitation in the village being done in the winter, and the outlying farms in the summer. But when one comes to the towns with large populations, the invariable answer is “house to house visitation with the shortage of staff is impossible.” Many parishes have bands of district visitors and magazine distributors by whom most of the houses are visited, and sick, new-comers, and other cases reported to the clergy; but for the clergy the invariable tale is “sick, Communicants, members on the electoral roll, and members of the congregation take all my time.”

ii.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

Church Day Schools.

Rural Deanery.	Parishes.	No. with Church Day Schools.	No. in which clergy teach.	No. in which clergy do not teach.
Chester-le-Street	19	3	3	0
Durham	17	6	2	4
Easington	22	5	2	3
Gateshead	20	5	3	2
Houghton-le-Spring	17	7	4	3
Jarrow	22	9	5	4
Lanchester	16	5	3	2
Wearmouth	32	11	4	7
				and one teaches in Girls' High School
Auckland	22	5	4	1
Barnard Castle	10	7	4	3
Darlington	20	10	7	3
Hartlepool	19	11	5	6
Stanhope	16	7	3	4
Stockton	22	11	9	2

In every case where the clergy do not actually teach, they visit the schools, keep in touch with the syllabus and teaching that is given, and in many cases leave it to the Day School teachers as better able to give it than themselves.

Sunday Schools.—In many of the country parishes, either the Vicar or the Vicar and his wife are the only teachers, and therefore no class for training teachers could be held; or where the teachers are so few in number, say two or three, sometimes one, no regular class for training. *In two or three parishes, the incumbent states that*

he does not believe in Sunday Schools, and takes all the children in Church in a children's Service ; but in all the remaining parishes, quite half have a weekly preparation class for instructing and preparing the teachers with their weekly lessons.

Other Organizations.—It is difficult to summarize. Apart from stating that most parishes have Bible Classes, Clubs, Mothers' Union, Scouts, Girl Guides, G.F.S., the only safe method would be to turn up the record of any particular parish and see what the list is.

The only fact to which attention might be drawn is the number and names of the parishes which have "no other organizations."

The following parishes answer "none" to Question 2. (iii):—

Rural Deanery.	Parish.	Other Organisations.
Gateshead	Lamesley	None
Houghton-le-Spring	Penshaw	"
" "	Seaham	"
Wearmouth	Wearmouth, St. Nicholas	"
Auckland	Witton-le-Wear	"
Barnard Castle	Forest and Frith	"
" "	Winston	"
Darlington	Denton	"
"	Dinsdale	"
"	Sadberge	"
Hartlepool	Elwick Hall	"
Stanhope	Heatherycleugh	"
"	Rookhope	"
"	St. John's Weardale	"
"	Westgate	"
Stockton	Bishop Middleham	"
"	Bishopton	"
"	Elton	"
"	Longnewton	"

iii.

CONFIRMATION.

Notice of.—The general impression of the returns is that incumbents use most of the means which they think will be effective. In small country parishes where incumbents know everybody, it is obvious that they only call at the homes of the probable Candidates. In larger parishes most of the clergy use all their organizations as well as the pulpit. Many of them mention the fact that they regard the teaching in their Sunday Schools as planned and directed with the view to preparing their children for Confirmation and Holy Communion.

Duration of Preparation.—The average duration of preparation classes is three months; some are less and many are more. But only two (Byers Green and Dinsdale) appear to be less than eight weeks, and these continue instruction about Holy Communion for some weeks afterwards.

The Subject of Instruction.—In every case but two the instruction is based upon the Catechism. Of these two, the instruction given at one is described as “Missions and Holy Communion.” The instruction given at the other is described as “Regeneration, Repentance, Conversion, Acceptance, Self-Surrender,” and they sign the pledge willingly. Two parishes have adopted the “course” as outlined recently in the “Bishoprick.”

The Register.—Practically every parish keeps a register, except three. One of the three writes,

“My Candidates are so few that I enter their names in the Vestry Register of Church Services.” One of them writes, “I keep a card index”; and one of them writes, “I keep a yearly list but not a Register.”

Proportion of Communicants.—Many of the incumbents say that it is very difficult to give any idea; all of them hesitate because of the unceasing fluctuation of population. Most of them state that the average attendance at the great Festivals is much higher than the average monthly attendance, and of course than the average weekly attendance, but taking the monthly attendance as a basis they place it about 45 per cent.

Manuals.—Some of the incumbents give none, but many, in fact most of them do, and the following are the titles and authors of the Manuals given in the diocese to Confirmation Candidates :—

Holy Communion	By Bishop Walsham How
Helps to Worship	(Mowbray, Ltd.)
Fidelis : A simple preparation for Holy Communion	(Longmans & Co.)
Manual	By Bishop Wilkinson
Manual	By Bishop Moule
My Prayer Book	By Bishop Ridgeway
After Confirmation	By Canon Joynt
Communicants' Manual	By Canon Randolph
St. Swithun's Prayer Book	
The Feast of Divine Love	
Before the Altar	By Dr. Wilson
My Communion	By O. G. Mackie
The Christian Way	By Vernon Staley

The Sanctuary	By Dr. Dearmer
S.P.C.K. Leaflet and Booklet	
No. 2818.	
“ I Will. I Do ”	
Plain Communion Book	By E. C. Dernier
“ The King’s Table ”	By Canon Tait
“ Nearer to God ”	By Evan Daniel
The Communicant’s Guide	By Haldane
Manual of Instruction	By Perry Gore
Christian’s Handy Book of	
Prayer	
My Prayer Book	
A man’s pocket Book of	
Prayer	
Steps to the Holy Table	
Before the Throne	
The Holy Table	By Canon Everard
The Guide to Heaven	
Duty and Service	By Rev. C. S. Smith

iv.

LAY WORKERS.

Lay Workers.—This part of this question has been a difficult one to analyse, because so many of the incumbents have mixed up the question about Lay Workers with the question about Licensed Lay Workers; the answer to the latter being also included in the answers to the former. The general impression given by the answers is :—

- (1) That a large number of laymen read the lessons at Matins in Parish Churches.

- (2) That, in the absence of curates, laymen take the services at Mission Churches.
- (3) That laymen occasionally take Children's Services in the Parish Churches.
- (4) That Licensed Diocesan Readers do a considerable amount of work in the Parish Churches during the holidays of the clergy.
- (5) That there is a *very* large body of faithful laymen and laywomen doing yeoman service for the Church in many and varied ways.

M.U. and P. and R. Work.—The assistance rendered by the Mothers' Union in this work is almost entirely by the Women's Offering each year.

Sponsors.—The general tone of the answers is "little or nothing." The clergy do their best in many cases to impress upon the Sponsors their duties, and also to obtain the requisite number of qualified persons, but in many cases they say it is extremely difficult. They are compelled to have recourse to the parents only. *The clergy ask for guidance* in this matter, and would be most grateful not only for guidance but also for *some strong episcopal pronouncement upon the matter.*

V.

PREACHING.

Special Sundays.—The complete list of the names of “Special Sundays” observed by the clergy during the year are :—

S.P.G.	British Legion
C.M.S.	C. and C.C.S.
U.M.C.A.	Patronal
A.C.S.	Dedication
C.P.A.S.	Waifs and Strays
National Society	Bible Society
Harvest	Life Boat
Hospital	Boys’ Brigade
S.S.	Missions to Seamen
Children’s	Choir
Armistice	Mothering
Civic	Missions to Jews
Diocesan Quota	Dr. Barnardo’s
Animal	Temperance
Health	

Of course it does not mean that every parish observes every one of these. But St. Margaret’s, Durham, heads the list with 13. There are several parishes with 9; most of the rest observe Harvest, Hospital, Foreign Missions, and Armistice; and a few do not observe any at all.

Several of the incumbents, however, state in their returns that they do not regard Harvest and Armistice as Special Sundays, and a number of the incumbents state that, although they observe Special Sundays, they do not change the course of lessons or psalms.

Course of Instruction.—This question is put in two parts. The first part asks :—

“ How far do you use the pulpit for systematic instruction in Christian faith and morals ? ”

The general answer with very few exceptions indeed is “ always ” : and the general tone of the answers is one of aggrieved feeling that their duty in this respect should ever be doubted. Many of them state that they follow the course of the Church’s year, and many more say that they base their instruction “ on the Collects, Epistles, Gospels or Lessons for the day.” The second part of the question is :—

“ Have you given courses of exposition of any part of the Bible, or of the Prayer Book ? ”

It seems from the answers that the majority of the clergy have misread the point of this question. If it means courses on the Beatitudes, the Letters to the Seven Churches, or similar passages like that, then most of them have done so ; but if it means instruction on the History, Composition, Contents, etc. of Books of the Bible, especially in view of all the modern knowledge and interpretation, then lamentably few state that they have done so. Many state that they have given a course on the Prayer Book ; there again, if it means on the History, Composition, etc. of the Prayer Book or its Services, then few seem to have done this.

Parochial Mission.—The Church Army Van has been in less than one dozen parishes, and the Report of the incumbents in every case but one states it was of little permanent value. Another effort was made simultaneously in several parishes in the Deaneries of Wearmouth and Gateshead, but the Report generally is that it was of some value to the faithful but little or no value in bringing in the lapsed. The great bulk of the answers is that no Parochial Mission has been held in the parish for years, and only six incumbents state that they are thinking about the advisability of having one. In some of the parishes of Gateshead a Mission of Service was held during February 1928, and was useful in deepening the Spiritual life of the faithful.

Christian Scientists and Faith Healing.—The answer in every case is “they have no influence at all” or “they have very little influence indeed.” Pastor Jeffreys wherever he went attracted a great following of the poorer people, especially women, and for the time being left some influence, but in every case it is slowly or rapidly dying down.

Spiritualists.—Here again most of the incumbents give exactly the same answers as above, little or no influence, but the clergy regard them as a greater force and more permanent force with the people than either of these previous bodies.

Secularists.—Here the majority of replies is “no influence at all.”

vi.

GENERAL CONDITIONS.

1. *Unemployment*.—Where this is prevalent it affects in the following ways :—

- (a) Want of money means want of clothes and no money for the offertory, and both these keep children from school and Church, and parents from Church too.
- (b) It causes depression, despondency, and indifference.
- (c) It in some cases makes men bitter against God and produces unbelief.

But in spite of it and of these effects, it is remarkable how bravely the people bear it, and how loyal the bulk of them are to their Church and its Services.

2. *Political Agitation*.—On the whole very little indeed.

3. *Secularization of Sunday* is invariably coupled with increased facilities of movement, the latter being a worse evil and the chief contributory cause of the former. Most clergy pronounce both to have a bad effect on Sunday Observance and worship.

4. *Cinemas and Dancing*.—Some pronounce them good, some harmful, but nearly all regard the latter as much worse than the former. The great effect of both on the young people is that

it is very difficult to get them to come to week-night services or to get up on Sunday morning to early Communion after late Saturday dances.

5. *Men's Clubs* are considered harmful, because of the drinking that goes on; and though Women's Institutes are socially beneficial, they do tend to draw away both members and activities from the Mothers' Union and Church Work.

6. *Broadcasting*.—On the whole, good.

7. *Co-operation with Nonconformity*.—There are friendly relationships everywhere, but there seems to be no extensive active co-operation except on Armistice Day, in open air services, on Bible Society platforms, and in Temperance work, but the whole tone of the answers is that beyond these co-operation seems neither practicable nor advisable.

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